

The English Review

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The English Review

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CURRENT COMMENTS

By Derek Walker-Smith

April, 1937

Sir Austen Chamberlain

THE ENGLISH REVIEW shares very keenly the universal regret at the death of Sir Austen Chamberlain. He was a great public servant, a veteran champion of Conservatism, a kindly and courteous man and the embodiment of Parliamentary Institutions at their very best. In his later years he acted as an independent Conservative, relying for his influence not on any organized support but on the great authority which his high character and long services ensured for him. In earlier years he had been more closely identified with the party combat ; and it fell to him to receive from his great father the mantle of chief prophet and leader of the Protectionist Movement. Sir Austen, like Mr. Neville Chamberlain, had the gratification of seeing the great crusade for Protection carried to a triumphant conclusion. In other respects he left the world and his country at a time when the present is a matter for doubt and the future gives cause for anxiety. But nothing in his unique experience of politics, extending over a period of more than forty years, ever gave Sir Austen reason to doubt that the salvation of this country was to be found along its traditional lines of Conservative principle, National sentiment and Imperial co-operation.

Disaster and the Daily Press

IT is the habit of the Daily Press to create its own standard of value. This process is seen clearly in operation when an event, in respect of which the Press has been

campaigning, turns out otherwise than was prophesied or desired. A very good instance was provided in the recent London County Council Election. For two or three weeks before the event a large section of the Press had devoted a considerable amount of space to impressing upon their metropolitan readers the paramount necessity of rescuing the Municipal Government of London from Socialist hands. When the event went against them and the Socialists were confirmed and strengthened in their hold on London, the Press cursorily dismissed the result as a news item, and found something new and less inconvenient to discuss with its readers. It is perhaps part of the justification of a monthly journal that it is not obliged to follow this ostrich policy. If things go wrong, it can, and indeed it should, inquire into the reason for the disaster and the significance properly belonging to it.

The L.C.C. Election and Political Principles

THE result of the London County Council Election need have come as a surprise to nobody who took the trouble to investigate the situation. The reasons attaching to the result have some importance in wider campaigns; for that reason it is to be hoped that their lesson will be learnt before it is too late. The defeat of the Municipal Reform Party—apart from its name, which is a liability of definite though unascertained proportions—was due to three main causes. Of these the most important was that fundamental reason, insisted on so often in the ENGLISH REVIEW as the *sine qua non* of political existence, that the Party went into battle with no principle emblazoned on their banner. That the Municipal Reform Party was in a difficult position in this respect would be denied by no intelligent observer. Those candidates at the late election, who had a sound political instinct, realized this deficiency in the Party programme before embarking upon their campaign. Several of them, therefore, selected, as the main point of principle on which to fight, the great issue of the defence of London. Here undoubtedly there was a distinction in principle between the Opposition candidates, who were anxious that steps should be taken

to put the capital city of the Empire in a decent state of preparedness, and the Socialists and Communists, with their strange admixture of international aggressiveness and inertia in the business of National Defence. This issue was of the greatest importance and still is. Unfortunately it was not a live issue at the election, on account, paradoxically enough, of the action of the National Government. An Electorate, which had just been told that the National Government intended to expend the sum of £1,500,000,000 on defending them, felt that that side of the business had been fairly arranged for, and that they might cast their municipal vote irrespective of defence and preparedness. That a Socialist County Council is perhaps more detrimental when a Government is engaged in a plan for defence than when it is inactive in this respect, is a truth which largely escaped the Electorate, because they did not allow their minds to be directed towards it.

Centralizing Local Government

AND what of the more strictly domestic issue? Here again the Municipal Reform Party was in a difficulty. The truth is that the business of local government is becoming less and less a matter for the determination of those immediately elected by the people for that purpose. The duties of Councils are becoming to an ever-increasing extent duties imposed upon them by the central legislature. Thus the Milk Scheme, for which London Socialists were so active in taking credit, was merely an administrative duty imposed upon the County Council by the decision of Parliament. Similarly, the provision of salaried midwifery which was another point for which London Socialist, tried to take credit, was a statutory duty imposed by the Midwives Act. In these circumstances it can be seen that no party in Municipal affairs is master of its own destiny. Either Party has got to provide more Council houses in a given way, if that is the will of the central legislature; and what applies to houses applies to a great many other activities in the sphere of local government work. It follows from this that the programme of the two Parties could on many points not be strikingly dissimilar. The

fact itself was widely noticed before the election, but the reason for it very rarely, if ever, supplied. It is not because Socialists and Conservatives suddenly feel a weakening of their principles when they come to deal with local government: it is rather that as the apparent power of local government extends, its real independence is being gradually diminished.

The Effect Abroad

THE full effects of the Socialist victory in London are not yet discernible. In our opinion it will not easily be reversed at the polls. To this extent Mr. Morrison's boast, that he can rule London for ever, is not without some measure of justification. But it follows, from what has been said in the preceding paragraph, that in certain circumstances a central government might find a Socialist Council an imperfect instrument of its will for purposes of local government. This may appear now an improbable contingency; but the possibility of such an event should restrain the exuberance of Mr. Morrison. Meanwhile what of the effect of this Socialist victory abroad? The average Englishman, and more particularly he who does not live in London, will rightly think that this is the most immediately important aspect of the Socialist victory. Its apparently logical effect must be bad throughout the continent of Europe. Its effect in France may be to depress the Right Wing in their gallant effort to rescue their country from the Franco-Soviet Pact. The strongest argument which these patriotic Frenchmen are able to advance is that Great Britain, a strong national country, has guaranteed their Eastern frontier, and therefore they have nothing to gain and everything to lose by an alliance with Russia, which would draw them into Eastern European quarrels in which France has no interest. The fact that the citizens of London have just entrusted the government of their city to a Party which cannot even take the proper steps for the defence of that city, will not be helpful to this line of argument; and the result may be to confirm many Frenchmen in the belief that they must of necessity rely

upon Moscow. As for Russia itself, the spectacle of so decisive a victory, brought about with active Communist assistance, must serve as an incentive to fresh propaganda in this country and an increased effort to undermine our national strength. In the great Fascist Powers additional credence may be given to the fallacious assumption, held in some quarters, that we are a decadent nation, unable or unwilling to preserve our place in the world. Amongst those lesser Powers, which still look to this country for leadership, there may be some grave searching of heart at the contemplation of what the future may hold in store, if this is to be taken as an index of British opinion.

The Electorate and Defence

THIS is the apparent logic of the situation, and represents no doubt the light in which it will largely be interpreted abroad. Indeed the Socialist-Communist alliance in London put the international effect of the election in the forefront of their propaganda. "Win London and save Madrid" was a favourite, if fanciful, slogan. That the spectacle of General Franco, halting in his advance at the news that Bow and Bromley had returned a red, or Bethnal Green a pink, is one which could bear only Communist scrutiny, is true. But it is significant that they attach so much importance to the international impression likely to be created. To some extent that impression will no doubt be created, as indicated above. In fact such an impression would be based upon a misconception of the motives at work in the late election. Many people, guided by Mr. Morrison's skilful propaganda, voted Socialist, in spite of having given their vote to the National Government at the last election. By giving that vote to the Government with its £1,500,000,000 defence programme they felt that they had gained security; they were not going to give a second vote on that issue. They would give the second vote to the Socialist Party, because they thought it would spend money lavishly at County Hall. But, if a General Election were to be held to-morrow, the majority of these people would again vote for the National Govern-

ment to ensure that the money was there to be spent by the Socialist County Council. If a General Election were to be held to-morrow, the issues of security and defence would again be before the Electorate, and the verdict would be not dissimilar to 1935. To this extent the result of the London County Council Election is an irrelevance. It is only to be hoped that it will be seen to be so abroad.

Principles and Propaganda

THE two other causes of Socialist victory go less deep. The superiority of their propaganda was undeniable. The Municipal Reform Party endeavoured to fight the election on statistics, which, while being good defensive equipment, are not calculated to appeal to the masses. For this purpose the pictorial propaganda of the Socialist Party was much better suited. It is true that many of the photographs, so extensively reproduced by the Socialist Party, depicted services in the creation of which the Socialists had no share. But, from an electioneering point of view, this was comparatively unimportant. It is the impression which counts, not the detailed support which can be given to it. Again the slogan "Let Labour finish the job" was as psychologically right in its appeal as the Conservative Safety First slogan of 1929 was wrong. In a democracy propaganda is essential, and must be harnessed to right principles if those principles are not to perish.

Tactics at County Hall

TO the inferiority in propaganda was added a deficiency in tactical sense. The Municipal Reform representatives at County Hall spent three years in failing to challenge an issue on any point that arose. They then went to the Electorate and expected them to believe that the Socialist Party was a danger to London, which could only be averted by the return of these active gentlemen to County Hall. It is to be hoped that such of these gentlemen as have again gone back will display some of the spirit in minority, which Mr. F. E. Smith infused into the

beaten Conservative ranks in the years following 1906. It is also a matter of surmise as to how valuable the support of the Press was in the last two or three weeks before the campaign, when it is set against the three years' extensive publicity given to Mr. Morrison and his Socialist County Council by the same papers in the preceding three years. If the cause of the Right is to survive in triumph, the waging of the battle will have to be less amateurish and more whole-hearted in the future.

Freedom of Speech and Fascism

IT was no doubt a further manifestation of Mr. Morrison's well-known Cockney humour when he claimed the result of the election as a victory for decency in politics. Apart from the question of the morality of using as election propaganda pictures of civic amenities which owed nothing to the Socialist Party, there was the old vexed question of freedom of speech. Whether it was Socialist policy, or whether it was the influence of their Communist friends, of whose generous assistance there were signs in so many of the constituencies, the fact remains that in doubtful constituencies the Municipal Reform speakers had to fight for a hearing against a perfect barrage of interruption. This sort of interruption is in no sense intelligent heckling, but merely prolonged mass shouting with a view to drowning the speaker's voice or intimidating his morale. Though this is the Socialist-Communist interpretation of freedom of speech at their opponents' meetings, they are quick to mete out disciplinary treatment to any inquiring elector who so much as opens his mouth in an effort to elicit information at their own meetings. The truth is that freedom of speech in some areas in this country is in danger. Someone recently remarked that it would be impossible for the leader of the National Government to-day to hold an open public meeting in London, Glasgow or Manchester. This statement, which there is little reason to doubt, is a strange commentary on our much vaunted democratic institutions. It is for this reason that those who value freedom of speech should

congratulate Sir Oswald Mosley and his candidates on their successful showing in the East End. It is no mean achievement to have gone into the heart of Red London, and to have extorted the right of free speech from reluctant Reds by methods the force of which they could not fail to see. The support, which those candidates won for their unfashionable policy of Britain first, was won exclusively from the ranks of the working-classes. As such it was a notable achievement in that struggle to obtain freedom for the expression of their opinions in hostile quarters, which is recalled in Mr. A. K. Chesterton's *Portrait of a Leader*,* and should have the effect of showing that no area need be considered lost to Communism.

The Right Book Club

IT is a far cry from the East End to Bloomsbury and Henrietta Street, but not so far as it used to be. They are linked now in amicable intercourse within the ranks of the Popular Front. Their reading-matter is supplied to them by Mr. Gollancz's Left Book Club, which certainly appears to have secured a considerable measure of success in its enrolment of members. For this reason it is all the more desirable that the case for culture, as interpreted by the Right, should not go by default. Messrs Foyle have risen to the occasion and launched their Right Book Club. There are, no doubt, those who would wish the whole field of literature to be kept altogether out of the realm of political disputes and distinct from the controversy between rival political theories. Unfortunately this has been rendered impossible by the determined and ubiquitous political evangelism of the Left Wing writers, a process which has been subjected to a brilliant scrutiny and scathing criticism by Mr. Wyndham Lewis. In the sphere of weekly journalism the Left Wing is all-powerful; and it is that 10 per cent to which these journals appeal, which moulds the political thought of the less interested and easily influenced 90 per cent. It is the aim of the Right Book Club to provide "the public with vital, interesting,

**Portrait of a Leader* A. K. Chesterton. Action Press Ltd., 3s. 6d.

authoritative books on the leading political and social questions of our time," freed from the fashionable Left Wing bias of the day. The patrons include statesmen of the calibre of Lord Lloyd, and the independent selectors number amongst others, General Hoskins of Ashridge, and Mr. Anthony Ludovici, whose work is well-known to readers of the ENGLISH REVIEW. Books, of which the ordinary edition will be sold to the general public at 7s. 6d., 10s. 6d., and 12s. 6d., will cost members of the Right Book Club, who pay no membership fee or subscription, only 2s. 6d. for their special edition. Nor will the books be confined to those issued by any one publishing house. The first choice of the Right Book Club is Sir Arthur Willert's *The Empire in the World*, and the second, of especial interest to the readers of the ENGLISH REVIEW, is *Lords of the Inland Sea*, a new study of the Mediterranean Powers by Sir Charles Petrie, whose *Bolingbroke* is reviewed in another page of this issue.

The English Heritage

THE standards and culture of a great people are part of its heritage. With so much that is transatlantic in journalism, and with Left-Wing propaganda so rampant in the work of the *intelligentsia*, the struggle for the maintenance of our traditional culture was never more necessary, nor more difficult in the winning, than it is to-day. It is of the greatest importance that literature in this country should not be allowed to become a Left Wing preserve. Every step which is taken to counter this danger is a contribution to the great cause of English culture. The Right Book Club bids fair to be such a contribution; and the ENGLISH REVIEW congratulates those who inspired it on calling in the old world to redress the balance of the new.

Agricultural Notes

By *Rusticus*

MELTING snow reveals many of the interesting features of the landscape. After the recent fall I was standing on a hill looking out over a wide stretch of my own countryside. There were acres of bracken covering small fields interspersed among the woodlands with only the lines of hawthorn trees marking former fences. Everywhere the ridge and furrow of other days showed up and undulations not usually visible clearly stood out. It was possible to trace all the cross-workings of the plough where fields had changed in shape, and more particularly where forest and dereliction had followed up the retreat of the cultivator. Fields that even the Great War forbade to call upon gave unmistakable witness of the part they must have played in the defeat of Napoleon and even earlier threatened invaders. Thus, as we pass into another phase of national panic, we are reminded of the infinite potentialities of our own resources. Meanwhile the landscape falls back into that state of natural wildness that made the backgrounds of Gainsborough and Reynolds before the days of Coke and Townshend.

The scars of cultivation call to mind the large population that must have toiled in the fields before the exodus to town and Empire commenced. There were not even iron ploughs or binders to assist the work of those days. These scattered headlands, too, illustrate the self-sufficiency of Great Britain in comparatively recent years. They reveal "the co-efficient of ruralicity" in our national life about which Professor Stapledon recently wrote,* and which most of our neighbours in Europe have maintained. It shows what could be done and ought to be done in an age of unemployment to increase the true margin of safety for an island power. Without the plough the sword is a source of fear in peace time and of impotence in time of war. I thought this point about increasing our arable land was very well made in the agricultural page of *The Times* on a recent Monday. I know that without breaking up normal

*"The Land." Faber & Faber.

pastures I could double my own acreage under cultivation. Nothing but the rabbit feeds over acres of our higher land in Great Britain.

* * *

When I last wrote the incessant rain was my greatest misfortune, but now I have more acute troubles. I have lost several of my best ewes just as they were due to lamb. Three theaves that I bought into the flock at a high price last autumn have died of that obscure ailment conveniently called pregnancy toxæmia. The ewe goes senseless and then dies in a short time, while the post mortem examination shows that the liver and kidneys are affected. Invariably twin lambs are present and I am told that the trouble is known colloquially in many parts as "twin-lamb disease." My ewes are in very good condition, and as they have alternated between roots and a healthy upland pasture I am not disposed to suspect bacterial infection. I am informed on one hand that the trouble is due to protein deficiency in the food but yet another seat of learning says there is mineral deficiency in the ground. This uncertainty does not get one much further and I am sure myself that this death before lambing has been on the increase in recent years.

Ill-luck always seems to accumulate and wait for a good day on which to descend. I lost a cow calving one Saturday night; then the organ remained silent on Sunday morning because the organist had also lost her cow. Fresh from the depression of an unsung service, I went up to the farm to find the first two of my ewes had expired. Within half an hour portions of their anatomy draped the barn floor and were being passed critically from hand to hand. Later, the lunch-time conversation was a mournful discussion of the probability of weeds, germs and the recollections of possible accidents. The tragedies of the farm, unlike those of the office, cannot be put aside from Saturday until Monday morning. They come upon us waking and sleeping, holiday and festival alike. They are often coloured with a touch of humour after the event, although these are not times when one can afford to take greater losses than

the market offers for much of our livestock, leave alone the dead.

* * *

I wish I knew the scientific justification for the old maxim "a fall of snow is worth a coat of dung." I am sure that it is a profound trick in practice.

* * *

I have had some gilts running among beech trees in a long stretch of windbelt for the last five months. They have been very meagrely done but I have seldom seen pigs in better condition. I am hoping to let them farrow there and gradually to divide up the whole mile or so of plantation into pig-pens. Pigs are by nature woodland feeders and there is no doubt that they find a good deal of sustenance in the mast, acorns and truffles that abound beneath beech and oak trees. Such things have a high feeding value in comparison with much that we so laboriously cultivate. Moreover, the aeration of the soil improves the older trees and opens up a good seed bed for regeneration when the pigs are removed. I am hoping shortly to use pigs to clear up a woodland area for tree-planting and especially to eradicate nettles. The man who rings pigs certainly deprives himself of one of the cheapest cultivators that nature has provided.

I was very interested the other day to see a farm where acres of pasture have been improved by intensive pig-folding. The farm was situated at a good altitude and the surrounding pastures were very poor. The pigs had cleaned the area, piece by piece, and wild white clover had sown itself freely. Actually the pasture did not improve the first year, so I was told, but it did so rapidly after a single mowing. Of course, the paramount value of the pig as a manuring agent has always been recognized, not least by those artists in intensive cultivation, the Chinese. Moreover, a pig that has run out for four months or so puts on better weight for age as a baconer when the time comes.

* * *

Following the annual meeting in London of the Royal English Forestry Society, there was a most interesting

discussion on the state of our private woodlands. Sir Roy Robinson, the Chairman of the Forestry Commission, gave a moderate and forbearing outline of the situation and Lord Phillimore, among others, admirably stated the individual landowner's point of view. The position is that much of the woodland felled during the Great War has not been replanted. Moreover, Great Britain was under-afforested in 1914 in comparison with most of her European neighbours and fast-moving towards industrial desert. Death duties and political uncertainty have deprived much of the best forest land of capital for plantations, and rabbits through lack of intensive game preservation, have prevented natural regeneration of free-seeding species like ash and sycamore. Where estates have faced up to their death duties wood has been regarded as a "mineral" and exported for cash; where properties have been broken up and passed into the hands of small owners trees have been the last crop to receive attention from men who in the first place barely had sufficient capital to purchase. The Forestry Commission have made up the deficiency in many areas by intensive planting. However, the State Forester is unsympathetic to minute variations of soil and ignores the beneficial dictates of amenity and rural pursuits. The serried monotony of exotic conifers would not have been allowed by nature or the peasant woodman in a less short-sighted and less "planned" age.

In conclusion, the meeting agreed that planting was a good insurance against death duties, and that English hardwoods were going to be extremely valuable in fifty years' time. It is to be hoped that the Forestry Society succeed in their crusade to rouse a sense of duty among woodland owners. Trees do far more than assure our safety as a nation in war-time; they affect our climate and our character.

Othello

By Piers Clerk

SHAKESPEARE'S play *Othello* has three villains, of which the chief and another are self-deceivers.

The story is of the ruin of a Venetian senator's daughter in two stages ; first, the seduction, and then the murder. Both are done by Othello.

The first stage depends, however, on the character of Brabantio, and Iago has some share in the second.

Brabantio is the sort of man whose daughter ought to be ruined *pour encourager les autres*. To him she was simply :

" So opposite to marriage that she shunned
The wealthy curled darlings of our nation."

What a father ! He is of the conservative type which keeps a good creed for utterance, while slithering backwards down the line of least resistance. His character is summarized in the line :

" We lose it not so long as we can smile."

His comfort, after all, is not lost. It is only his daughter and honour that have gone !

Othello is black. To say, " No, he is a Moor," is pedantry, for Shakespeare, not ethnology, tells us the conventions in the play.

" An old black ram is tugging your white ewe." (Iago.)

" Run from her guardage to the sooty bosom
Of such a thing as thou." (Brabantio.)

He is as black as Franco's Moors are drawn in the *Daily Herald*, as the troops the French put on the Rhine.

In spite of his claim to royal descent, he is portrayed as a good fighting man but a bad officer. He lacks manners and judgment.

He abuses the hospitality of Brabantio to seduce Desdemona. Having opened his defence by seeking

sympathy, "For rude am I in my speech," he makes a florid rhetorical case, arguing that it was precisely by the talent of speech that he won Desdemona. Rhetoric is not a noble quality. He relies for his acquittal, however, primarily on the bias of the court :

" My services which I have done the signiory
Shall out-tongue his complaints."

His conscience is obedient :

" My parts, my title and my perfect soul
Shall manifest me rightly." (After the seduction.)
" For naught did I in hate, but all in honour." (After the murder.)

He sees Desdemona lose the handkerchief which later he believes she gave to Cassio. She drops it immediately after trying to bind it round his forehead. " Let it alone," he says, and leads her off-stage.

So much for the lover !

He connives at the attempt to murder Cassio when he knows Cassio is commander in Cyprus.

So much for the soldier !

His scheme for revenge is that Iago should arrange the death of Cassio while he deals with the woman.

So much for the hero !

Has not the playwright trapped ten generations of Englishmen ?

Brabantio loses fair possessions and smiles.

Othello robs and ruins with unruffled conscience.

Iago hastens, rather than alters, the course of events.

We are not Iagos so we call him the villain.

Australia Comes, America Goes

By William Teeling

NOT many months ago I had the opportunity of speaking at a meeting of the Institute of International Affairs in Brisbane, Australia. I was talking about the British Empire, and I was almost immediately corrected by two different Professors of standing in Queensland. It was not the usual correction—that the Empire is no longer an Empire but a Commonwealth of nations, it was a different argument. They said that the British Empire now consists of Great Britain and her colonies. There is also an Australian Empire.

Several weeks after this I was talking to French Government officials in Saigon, Indo-China. We were discussing what would happen to the Philippines if and when the United States withdrew. The Frenchmen insisted that it would be essential for Great Britain to take over the islands. I said that I was quite certain no such thought had entered the minds of the majority of people in Great Britain, if indeed it had entered anybody's mind. They pointed out that, if the British did not move into the Philippines, the Japanese in some form or another would almost certainly do so and that after that British trade with China and the Far East would be at the mercy of the Japanese. Some of us suggested that, if Great Britain tried to come to some such arrangement with the Philippines, war would be inevitable. At that I felt on firmer ground and insisted that Great Britain would under no circumstances go to the length of fighting for such a possession. To this the French replied that, even if the British did not want to, the Australians may force them so to do.

What then is the new policy of Australia, and what does she mean by her Empire? In the latter part of the nineteenth century the almost unexplored island of New Guinea was beginning to interest European nations. The English found themselves practically forced by the Australians to annex Papua, the south-easterly portion of New Guinea. They felt that as they were doing this for

Australia, the Australians should pay their share, and for some years the Queensland Government provided a portion of the funds for controlling Papua. By 1905, the British Government had decided to hand over the colony of Papua to the new Australian Commonwealth and, in 1908, Sir Hubert Murray became the Australian Lieutenant-Governor of this country. He has remained so to this day, covering a period of twenty-eight years—longer than that of any other modern Governor for a British King.

Sir Hubert is the elder brother of another famous Australian, who lives in England, Professor Gilbert Murray, and both brothers are very ardent supporters of the League of Nations. Sir Hubert, in addition, has been with Lord Lugard (popular now only with the older school), one of the leading apostles of indirect rule for natives. At first it seemed as if the personality of Sir Hubert would make this the policy of Australia, should she ever desire to develop colonies. Norfolk Island, not very far from the east coast of Australia, and the Lord Howe Islands were also taken over by Australia, but nothing more happened from the colonial point of view until the Treaty of Versailles. Then came the question of what should happen to the Kaiser Wilhelm Land, or the northern part of New Guinea. This former German colony was mandated to Australia, as were the islands of Samoa to New Zealand. It was still some years before it began to dawn on Australia that she was gradually developing a Colonial Empire. This realization meant facing the possibilities of complications with other countries. A few years ago, if one had looked for opinions about colonial government in Australia, one would have found that the only tangible feeling was that such colonies as Australia should have must only be those lands near the Australian continent, to protect her from possible enemies. Her fear of Germany in those days was great, was the reason for the annexation of Papua, and was possibly a reason for the desire to have the rest of New Guinea under mandate.

Since the fall of Germany, Japan has arisen and there has been considerable feeling in Australia for many years that Japan was a menace to her territory, and especially

to her White Australia policy. Considerable comfort was derived from the fact that the Japanese were still so far away. The possibility within the last year or two that the Japanese would get control over the Philippines has made Australians alarmed that the Japanese will be approaching much closer. It would seem to many that the Japanese themselves have got a policy of trying to get control of those countries nearest their own territory or, failing that, at least to see to it that other Great Powers have no hold there. The Australians are beginning to develop the same ideas. Papua and New Guinea are all right for the present. The fact that Japan might get the Philippines would be something more dangerous. The proximity of the Dutch in Java and Borneo and of the Portuguese in Timor has not worried Australian politicians, but should there be any danger of Japan obtaining any of these territories, then considerable fear would arise.

A few months ago a storm was raised all over Australia after Herr Hitler's remarks about the return of Germany's colonies. It showed Australia to be divided into two camps. There is the camp, still in a majority, who want to hold Australian colonies and who would be willing, up to a point, to increase them if necessary for defence purposes. But there is another school of thought, a school which has developed since the days when Sir Hubert's influence seemed supreme in colonial matters. This school thinks mainly of trade and it is convinced that the future of Australian trade lies in the Far East. This school has come into being since the acquisition of New Guinea. The discovery of gold has whetted the appetite both there and in Fiji, of the business men of Sydney and Melbourne and the younger fortune hunters from the country. A struggle is going on at the moment between the Australians, unaccustomed to the traditions of colonial government, trying to look after a territory mandated to them by the League of Nations and Australian business men of a type that is usually to be found in Alaska, South Africa, New Guinea, or any other gold-mining area.

It might be felt that the people trained by Sir Hubert Murray in Papua would be there to be drawn upon for

the government of New Guinea. Up to a point that is so. There are several Government officials to-day in Raboul who were previously trained at Port Moresby, but they are not numerous, nor are the conditions in New Guinea exactly similar. In Papua there is practically nothing except copra from which revenues can be raised. The type of man required to develop the native from a head-hunting savage into a village councillor and, at the same time, trek through the interior, leading a life as rough as can be imagined, is not necessarily a very intellectual type. On the other hand, the type required in New Guinea, in the gold mines and in the ports, and in the other trading centres must be superior.

The Mandates Committee of the League of Nations is very worried at the administration in New Guinea. It feels that far too many Government officials who are supposed to protect the native from the gold-mining employer are themselves resigning from their posts very soon after their arrival in the territory in order to become officials of these self-same companies at considerably higher salaries. On the other hand, the Government officials in New Guinea will tell you that the Mandates Committee supply them with a ridiculous number of unnecessary queries and, being accustomed to the developing of natives in Africa, seem quite erroneously to think that that is the correct method of dealing with natives in New Guinea. Not long ago, Geneva ordered that there should be Paramount Chiefs for New Guinea, that is to say, Chiefs over about twenty villages. A District Officer of my acquaintance duly sent for the only man hereditarily entitled to such a position. The man was delighted and immediately assumed the dress of his office, which consisted of a peaked cap like a chauffeur's hat, with a white band of office round the rim. But, after a short time, he came back to the District Officer looking very crestfallen. He said: "Nobody respects me as Paramount Chief because I have only one wife. If I am to rule over twenty villages, every one says I must have twenty wives." "Well, go and get them," said the District Officer. "But," replied the worried Chief, "I am a Christian and the

Methodists say that if I have more than one wife I shall go to Hell." "I am sorry," replied the District Officer. "Geneva requires that there be a Paramount Chief. You must make up your mind for yourself." A week later the man returned looking happy. "I will be Chief," said he. "I have twenty wives and I will go to Hell."

The business men in New Guinea are without any doubt out practically only to make money out of the territory, and they have shown that they are quite uninterested in the development of the native along the lines that Sir Hubert Murray is doing so carefully and so well farther south. In the last few months, over the question of a return of colonies to the Germans many of them have shown that they would be quite willing to give up the mandate if necessary, since they feel the German officials would run the country more efficiently from a business point of view than do their own officials. They are the same type of people as those who are advocating friendship with Japan in order to increase trade in the Far East. They would have Ministers to take the place of Trade Commissioners, and they encourage at every turn reciprocal Agreements and friendly gestures in the Far East but, oddly enough, they do not really form the majority of Australian opinion. The majority of Australians are very proud of their new colonies and are excessively keen to help them. They also feel that if their White Australia policy is to be defended they must be careful lest the Japanese approach too near or lest any other country of importance gain a footing close to their shores. They feel their only defence against such risks is a closer alliance with Great Britain, but they would combine sufficiently with their own ambitious traders to try and make Great Britain carry out Australia's policy in the Far East, that is, to make the British position ever stronger there in order to enable the Australians to trade with every-increasing facility.

The position between Australia and England in such policies is not understood by the outside world. As an example, many Colonial officials in New Guinea told me how much they wished they could spend a year or two

of their career at the Colonial Office in London, or that they could be seconded to some post in the British Colonial Service. They argued that the experience in Colonial government through the British Colonial Office is a heritage as much theirs as of the English. In Whitehall it was pointed out to me that, in view of the position of the Dominions being quite separate entities, nobody at the Colonial Office or the Dominions Office could suggest this, unless the Australian Government made the suggestion itself. But the Australian Government would be unwilling to do this, it seems, as it might show a recognition that the British Colonial Office had some authority over the Australian colonies, and so Australians are at the moment unable to profit from the past experience of the British.

Similarly, in the defence of the Empire, the New Zealanders are paying their quota towards the defence of Singapore and towards the building of battleships. The Australians, it is true, are also subscribing to Singapore, but they insist on building their own ships for themselves and having an Australian Fleet. What the future will hold nobody can tell, but the White Australia policy when originated, is known to have been completely contrary to what Great Britain wanted with regard to the Far East, and yet the Australians carried it through. To-day it is extremely galling to them in their mandate of New Guinea to find that the Chinese in the towns can quite fairly point out to them that they are not an inferior race but are fellow members of the League and fellow owners of New Guinea, and so the Australian is unable to prevent the Chinese from coming in and behaving as if he was the equal of an Australian. In the near future, Australia would seem to be likely to insist on an active Far Eastern policy for the Empire, as far as she can insist. In Great Britain there seems to be a tendency to let things settle themselves in the Far East, but Australia will do all in her power to counteract this tendency.

The country where the problem seems to me to be most likely to be brought to a head is in the Philippines. Here, I suppose, I obtained the same information as could any American or European in Manila and in the big cities.

But when I got marooned in Northern Luzon after a typhoon, I had more unusual opportunities of discussing with Filipinos of some position, and with Filipinos of no position, their opinions about the future. Briefly, they wished first and foremost to try and get the United States to keep at least some interest in their islands. Failing that, they did not pretend that they wanted complete independence; rather they asked that they should be mandated by the League of Nations to some other country. If at that time the League of Nations were really strong, then they would prefer to be mandated to Spain, with whom they still have an old-time link of affection. If, however, the League were weak and the mandating country would have to be one powerful enough to defend the Philippines on its own, then, failing the United States, they would prefer the British Empire, or, failing that, Germany, but never Japan, whom Filipinos distrust. All this seemed to me to point to the possibilities of grave dangers in the Philippines for the peace of the Far East within the next few years. If America goes, Great Britain herself might not mind so much whether Japan moves into the Philippines or not. If, however, Australia wants to move into Far Eastern affairs with ever-increasing activity this seems to me to necessitate a more active British policy in the Far East, instigated by Australia, whom Great Britain would never be willing to see secede from the Empire. Australia, on the other hand, for many years to come will equally be most unwilling to leave the British Commonwealth, and her ambition and her desire to push her position in the Far East will have to be governed by just what pressure she can bring to bear on the British to support her in her ambitions. Gradually the force of that pressure is increasing.

The Fleet Air Arm

By Major Oliver Stewart

THE problem of whether the Fleet Air Arm should remain as it now is, under the Air Ministry, or whether it should be transferred, together with its equipment, to the Admiralty, is bound up with the relative powers of the aeroplane and the surface ship ; but the curious thing is that those who maintain that the aeroplane is the most powerful of all weapons, incline generally to the view that the Fleet Air Arm should remain under the Air Ministry, while those who argue that the surface ship is able, when correctly armed and armoured, to meet aerial attack with a reasonable chance of success, incline to the view that the Fleet Air Arm should be handed over to the Admiralty. For myself, I contend that the aeroplane is more powerful in war than the ship, but, note that I do not say that it will invariably master the ship in combat. I say it is more powerful as a weapon of war.

Here, it seems to me, is that weak link in almost all arguments yet put forward about the control of the Fleet Air Arm. The aeroplane is visualized as attacking ships at sea. The air enthusiasts say that with its bombs it will put the ships out of action ; their opponents say that the armour of modern ships and the special guns with which they are equipped would protect them. And so the argument goes from side to side, finding echoes in the House of Commons, and being taken up—extraordinary to relate—by the Minister for the Co-ordination of Defence who, at least, ought to know better. Now I am not here going to do more than indicate roughly where the control of the Fleet Air Arm should lie ; but I am going to show why I believe that the aeroplane is more powerful in war than the ship.

It is because the aeroplane is the only weapon for those who believe in the doctrine of central shock, a doctrine I have described at length in some of the service journals. The aeroplane alone is capable of carrying out the doctrine of central shock. If the aeroplane is devoted to that purpose, it is the most powerful of all weapons of war. But in so far as it is devoted to other incidental purposes, it becomes less

powerful. Look now upon the existing Fleet Air Arm. It has fighting aeroplanes; it has torpedo-spotter-reconnaissance aeroplanes, and it has two-seater fighter-reconnaissance aeroplanes. Let it be presumed—as I am assured by the Air Ministry is the fact—that these machines have been selected because the Admiralty said it wanted them. What are they for?

In the reply to that question is my indictment of the Admiralty's outlook upon the aeroplane. For these machines are carried in ships as allies in the old game of sea warfare, of trade-route protection, of transport. They are, in brief, carried for purposes of the old kind of war; the kind of war that is already out of date. And the country whose fighting services are permitted to fiddle about with this old-fashioned kind of war will not last long in another major conflict. So long as the Admiralty wants the Fleet Air Arm because it thinks of it as an accessory to the real business of sea warfare, of battles between surface vessels, so long should it be prevented from obtaining control of it. For when the aeroplane is made to serve Army or Navy, cap in hand, it must always be unsuccessful as a weapon of war. It must always be nothing other than a nuisance to the older services, and of very little practical value to anybody.

But release the aeroplane from these ancient ideas which encompass it; treat it as an entirely new creation, and *not* as a long-range gun—which has been the Navy's favourite method—and it becomes clear that it has remarkable potentialities. When two countries are at war the final objective of both of them will be the destruction of life. It is not of great importance whether that destruction is brought about by starving the people, by means of a naval blockade, or by shelling them with a long-range gun. The destruction of life is the essential thing. It has been assumed recently that war is waged solely between armies, and that any country that wages war against a civil population is guilty of a breach of international law. But wars are made by, with and for, breaches of international law.

If in the past it has been the armies and the navies that have borne the brunt of any war, it has been because they

have been interposed between the attackers and the civil population. But, the less it becomes possible to interpose protective screens, the less will the civil population be kept out of war. We may, perhaps, admit then, that the destruction of life is the main objective of a country at war, and that that country will not be particularly interested whether the life is civilian or service. The Germans have been pointing out lately with considerable vehemence that the war of the future will be a "total" war. Every man, woman and child, service and civilian, will do his bit.

We have ships, tanks and aeroplanes. Which is the most effective in the destruction of life? The ships may be able to set up an effective blockade which will eventually throttle the enemy country. The tanks may be able to advance over the enemy country destroying any opposition they may meet, and scattering death on a scale sufficiently extensive to cause the enemy to sue for peace. But it seems likely that the aeroplane could gain this effect more surely and more quickly than either of them. The effects of a blockade are bound to be slow in coming. But the effects of a succession of bomb raids are immediate.

The doctrine of central shock, then, holds that every aeroplane, not merely a few selected ones, but every aeroplane capable of the work should be devoted to hitting, hitting hard, and keeping on hitting. That is the doctrine of central shock. And observe its implications. It turns vast numbers of present-day types of aeroplane into accessories of doubtful value. The old strategy, where communications had to be guarded above all else, fades; and a new strategy takes its place; a strategy of high-speed offensive. It is really history repeating itself.

There was the time of the suit of armour. Men waged war in suits of armour which restricted their movements and reduced their speed. The introduction of the rifle made the suit of armour redundant. A man in a suit of armour was no better protected than a man naked. So the next step was speed in the offence, speed to overcome the impossibility of carrying on the person armour sufficiently heavy to resist the rifle bullet. Men fought by taking the offensive, leaving their bodies completely open to attack,

but trusting to hit first and to hit hardest. The tank appears to have modified that attitude, but as yet it has not gone far in that direction. So far as the aeroplane is concerned, the fast but naked offensive applies on the largest scale.

A country which wages war by air leaves itself relatively open to attack, but trusts to hitting first, and hitting hardest. It is almost exactly comparable with the unarmoured infantry soldier and his rifle. If bows and arrows were still used the infantry man would probably be wearing armour. But the rifle strikes too quickly, too far, and too hard for armour to be effective. Ships were the armour of England until the coming of the aeroplane. But now they are as ineffective in protecting the body and heart of England as the personal armour would be to protect the body and heart of a modern infantry soldier.

The doctrine of central shock assumes that the aeroplane is used offensively all the time. It is an unpleasant doctrine. But it is the only doctrine that will work. And the Fleet Air Arm has been created and built up on the assumption that it does not exist. The concept of carrying aeroplanes to hurl at some land objective is almost unknown. Instead we have that gross anachronism the "torpedo-spotter-reconnaissance" aircraft. I do not know if I am right, but the Air Ministry assures me that the Admiralty chooses its aircraft, although it does not order them. If so, the Admiralty has not shown that realism which is demanded if it is to make good use of control of the Fleet Air Arm.

The Admiralty is fiddling about with aeroplanes, but always most carefully "keeping them in their place" as auxiliaries to the surface vessel, assuming gratuitously that if there were a war the enemy would send its aeroplanes to attack such useless things as capital ships. But why should an enemy send its aeroplanes to do that? They can be far more valuable, far more destructive of life, if engaged elsewhere. That seems to be the fundamental question which must be settled before we can be positive as to whether either the Air Ministry or the Admiralty should assume entire control of the Fleet Air Arm. Has the Admiralty a clear understanding of the employment of aircraft in

war, or does it regard them solely as auxiliaries to the surface vessels?

And now let me make another point. I am assured, I repeat, by the Air Ministry, that the Admiralty can choose what aeroplanes it wants for the Fleet Air Arm. I am assured furthermore that the only reason that the British Fleet Air Arm is one of the smallest among those of all the big powers in the world, is that the Admiralty has never asked for a bigger complement of machines, and that the reason it has not asked for a bigger complement of machines is that it has no carriers for them. So the smallness of the Fleet Air Arm and the types of machine it uses are, alike, the responsibility of the Admiralty, although supply is, of course, the business of the supreme authority, the Air Ministry.

Certainly, the Admiralty has failed to obtain a Fleet Air Arm of the size or type that it ought to have obtained. No monoplanes to the modern formula have yet appeared, although at least one is on order. The American Navy has the ultra-modern Vought XSBaU-1 and the Douglas XTBD-1. These are monoplanes with retractable undercarriages, wing flaps, variable pitch airscrews, and enclosed cockpits, and have very high top speeds. The fastest existing type in the Fleet Air Arm is the Hawker Nimrod, which is simply a Hawker Fury with larger wings and a few other modifications. It is a Royal Air Force machine dished up for the Fleet Air Arm.

Then there is the problem of the flying-boat. At present, coastal reconnaissance is a function of the Royal Air Force and the "General Reconnaissance" squadrons, as they are called, are equipped with landplanes, and come under the Air Ministry. But so do the flying-boats. They are also the Air Ministry's responsibility in all respects. If they were taken over by the Admiralty there would be division in the defence responsibilities. That is the chief argument advanced against the taking over by the Admiralty of the flying-boats.

Yet I am of the opinion that the Admiralty ought to take over the flying-boats. Of all marine aircraft they are the most positively "marine." At the moment they are

handled by people with no more knowledge of the sea than those who go out for a row at Southend. It so happens that flying-boats are not at present usable as instruments of central shock, so that the question of what use the Admiralty might put them to does not arise. The Air Ministry has not developed them to the fullest extent.

We find that the service flying-boats are all constructed on the old biplane formula, while the constructors of the fast civilian flying-boats, both in Britain and abroad, have almost all gone over to the monoplane formula. There is plenty of reason to feel dissatisfied about the flying-boats. There is plenty of reason for asking that they should be transferred to the Admiralty. But until the Admiralty shows a clearer conception of the fundamental values of the aeroplane, the question of whether the Fleet Air Arm would benefit or the reverse by Admiralty control remains obscure.

I may sum up the position as I see it at present, then, by stating categorically that the existing Fleet Air Arm is too small, and is equipped with aeroplanes intended for inessential duties; that the Air Ministry's view is that these machines have been supplied as a result of the specific demands of the Admiralty, and that the one class of aircraft which should immediately and without question come under the Admiralty, the flying-boat, is actually entirely under the Air Ministry.

Nobody can suggest that the position is satisfactory. It indicates that the authorities are unaware of the full implications of the doctrine of central shock, that the Air Ministry has given the Admiralty a few aeroplanes to play about with as a sop to its pride, and that the Admiralty has neglected to develop them or to understand their real uses. Divided control can never be entirely satisfactory, largely because it is hard to know who should be blamed when there is trouble. The Air Ministry has an answer to any criticism, saying that the Admiralty is responsible, while the Admiralty seems to suggest—though I have not personally approached this department on the subject—that it is tied hand and foot by the Air Ministry,

and is therefore prevented from developing the kind of Fleet Air Arm it would like to have.

It is presumably for the Minister for the Co-ordination of Defence to sift the matter and to decide just what proportion of the nation's aircraft resources—if any—should be controlled by the Admiralty, and just what proportion should be controlled by the Air Ministry. So far he has done almost nothing about it, beyond making a few vague or evasive replies in the House of Commons. Yet his is the responsibility. He ought to have acted before now, for no student of the position can think for one moment that all is well with the Fleet Air Arm. But Sir Thomas Inskip was entirely without experience of aircraft or war when Mr. Baldwin appointed him to his present position. He cannot, however, shirk much longer the responsibility which rests upon him.

Sooner or later—and, if we value the country's security, we shall hope that it will be sooner—Sir Thomas Inskip must consider the control of the Fleet Air Arm, and with it the control of the flying-boat squadrons. He will have to start by considering the aeroplane as a weapon of war, and by remembering that his objective as Minister for the Co-ordination of Defence must be, if he does his duty, to see that our defences are so co-ordinated that they can do the greatest possible destruction to life in any enemy country in the shortest possible time.

They are not at present so co-ordinated. On the contrary, a large part of our aircraft resources would obviously be engaged upon unimportant side-issues, upon assisting the Fleet or the Army, rather than in supporting and strengthening the striking force. On no other subject is clear thinking so essential as upon this, and on no other subject is there need for more speed than this. And let me emphasize finally that the problem does not revolve around the relative strengths in combat of the aircraft and the capital ship. That is a side issue for the simple reason that the aircraft might never be used against the capital ship.

We need not doubt that the armour of the modern capital ship and that its guns make it safe against aerial

attack, yet we may still believe that the aircraft is the most powerful weapon of war. Do not permit the question of who should control the Fleet Air Arm and of how it should be built up, and with what types of aeroplane, to be obscured by the bomber-versus-battleship controversy. I do not deny that that is also a necessary controversy. It is important to try and determine just how vulnerable a battleship is to air attack, and just how great are the chances of aeroplanes making the attack being brought down. But that is a different thing altogether from deciding how and what the Fleet Air Arm shall be, and who shall take absolute control of it.

The assurances of politicians that all is well with the Fleet Air Arm and that the Admiralty and the Air Ministry are working in the most perfect accord, are obviously—the assurances of politicians. All close observers know that there is constant friction, and that the Fleet Air Arm is suffering severely from it. Some action must be taken in the near future to remove the cause of this friction and to enable the Fleet Air Arm to take its place in the fabric of the fighting forces as an effective and up-to-date component.

Folly or Fertility

An Essay on Agriculture and National Independence

By Viscount Lymington

"**T**HE broken ends of dirty finger nails . . . I can connect nothing with nothing. . . ." The words are taken from T. S. Elliot's poem, appropriately called "The Waste Land."

To-day, the public is accustomed to the idea of an expenditure of £1,500,000,000 for National Defence, and equally to the expenditure annually of £270,000,000 on so-called social services. The purpose of Defence, and what we are called upon to defend, is vague and hazy ; at one moment it seems to be the protection of the Ghetto sweepings of Poland against our Moslem allies in Palestine, at another the call for war to save slave dealers in Abyssinia, bandits in Manchuria, or Communists in Spain, while we tolerate 35,000 casualties a year on our own roads. The purpose of education and better provision for lunatics is equally hazy and, indeed, when one considers the wavering contradictions in Imperial Defence, in Home Policy and in Foreign Policy, one comes to the conclusion that one can connect nothing with nothing, and so also one cannot connect anything with anything.

Yet, that there is a stirring to awake in the nation, still drugged by the futility of the last twenty years, one cannot doubt. Apart from the urgency of the question of the restoration of agriculture, it is also a psychological moment in which to try and see its place in the final awakening of the nation. If we can have a clear idea before that final awakening, the foundation will already have been laid, and the ultimate task made easier. In the two countries in Europe to-day which have a definite purpose in their outlook, agriculture takes the foremost place. It does so for three reasons, first that a healthy agriculture, fully utilized, gives the widest basis for national independence ; and, in the second place, it is also the prime factor for spiritual health ; and, thirdly, for physical health.

In another way, this was brought out in the February

issue of the *ENGLISH REVIEW*, in which was an article on craftsmanship, another on the dignity of labour in Germany, and a third on air defence. The need for psychological and physical health were shown to be the natural corollaries of craftsmanship and labour. In aerial defence the control of panic in the towns was fully stressed. In panic there is another aspect besides physical terrorism by a hostile air force. No words can be too strong to stress the importance of providing discipline and order against panic in air raids, but there is another form of panic as potent and as deadly, and that is the fear of famine. No one who has seen starving peoples will underrate this, or will minimize its lasting effect. Against this form of panic, as for physical and spiritual health, the land is a citadel. The land, in full production and in healthy heart, is the starting point, if not the only remedy in the achievement of discipline and health for national defence, because it is the basis of reality.

As something that is real, the land is a proper respecter of persons. Unlike the modern Demos and those who lead it, the land respects those who respect it, rather than the unfit, the parasites, and the clowns of the world. It is not an unfair criticism to the vast majority of the land in this country to say that, since 1914, its fertility has been steadily leached. This is so because there has been no purpose behind our Government. There has been no future and no stability for the soil. From 1914 to 1918 we consumed, because of dire necessity, the accumulated fertility of the previous generations. The War left the land understocked and under-cultivated. The so-called pressure of economics has completed the tale from then to now. The jungle has crept into the hedges, weeds into the furrow, and clay into the drains. The main efforts of agriculture have been directed to wresting a living from year to year from the soil, without respect to its needs or its capacities. Just as few landowners to-day would dare to expend money in afforestation for their grandchildren, so few farmers have been left with either economic ability or the spiritual hope to farm for the sake of the land, rather than the bank. At this moment, when we import £1,000,000 worth of food a

day, we are embarking on a vast scheme of defence, but except for the most casual lip-service, that scheme of defence implies no practical provision for insuring against the panic of famine through the soil of this country. Yet it is hard to see what can be the purpose of defending an island with a steadily increasing slave population, divorced from realities, enslaved by the bureaucrats of the social services, and the impersonal amalgamation of industrial combines. A man who works at a conveyor belt, lives in a jerry-built house or flat, who eats synthetic food, and enjoys a synthetic recreation, who is bullied and dragooned and shorn of all personal responsibility from birth to burial, may well wonder whether an international Soviet would not be as good a master as the present régime.

If we wish to have a nation to defend, then we must have a nation healthy in mind and body, and it must also be, so far as is possible, independent of the storms and the finances of the outside world. A country with only 7 per cent of its population even connected with the land is an ill-balanced one, but a nation which has to rely on invisible exports to pay for its dole, and ships in which to carry two-thirds of its food, must be at the mercy of other countries. It can have no political or moral independence. The majority of the £1,500,000,000 which we are proposing to spend will be spent upon the material of war. Even now the signs are all too clear that the men who are to handle that material will not be forthcoming voluntarily, and if we make no effort to improve our independence and our health, it is clear that the benefit of that defence will not go for any higher purpose than to make London the financial capital of the world—and ships, largely manned by Lascars and foreigners, flying the British flag, able to trade in order to bring in the food which keeps our own men on the dole.

The critics will say now that the land cannot afford to be the "spoilt baby" of the nation, and that, in fact, we are already spending an unwarrantable amount in subsidizing agriculture, as it is.

If we look to the past, we will find that in no great number of years £70,000,000 has been withdrawn from the land in death duties, and that each year two to three

million pounds go from the land alone to support a national church in tithe. When death duties are levied upon land, there is no reparation that can be made, as it can be made in industry. Nor is there reparation that can be made in the vast yearly sum which has been—and, in spite of an altered phraseology, is still being—paid out of capital for the tithe. So that to redeem past wrongs there is a case for agriculture, and if we were to add up the subsidies which foreign countries and our Dominions have employed in order to sell their agricultural products in this country, what we spend in subsidizing agriculture appears insignificant against the counter subsidies. Many of these are hidden, but they are none the less recognizable. In the case of New Zealand, Denmark and Australia, it is by a deliberate devaluation of the currency. In most other countries it is considerably more direct.

But even to argue from the point of view of reparations or equalization in subsidy with other countries is unimportant if we have a clear national purpose, which can be defined as health and independence. To this I would add as a corollary the balance between town and country, and balance of rewards for labour: that is the choice between finance and production, luxuries and realities. Health is the most important of these. Spiritual health comes from the land, because it deals with realities, and because a man who works on the land has a *life* as well as a *living*. His work is varied. He sees, and is part of its whole cycle. It demands skill and craftsmanship, which in civilized man is very largely the basis of human satisfaction. He is, moreover, still in personal and responsible touch with those for whom he works.

In the second place, there is physical health, which is partly interwoven with the spiritual. Imported food is bound to undergo metabolism, the results of which we are still unable to judge, but which we are beginning to realize is having grave effects on the health of the country. This is true not only of tinned food, but of chilled meat and foreign vegetable imports. There is, moreover, another point to be taken very seriously into consideration, and that is the quality of the land itself from which such foods

are grown. Apart from the vitamins which are destroyed by preservatives or staleness, it is known that, in spite of artificial manuring and other efforts to make up for the deficiencies of soils abroad, we still have to export pedigree stock to keep up the quality and stamina of the stock of those lands, generally speaking, from which our foodstuffs come. If there is a deterioration in animal life in lands abroad, which can only be repaired by a continuous flow of fresh blood from these islands, so also there is likely to be deterioration among those who eat the imported foodstuffs and not the foodstuffs of our own land. The older generation of Scotsmen differentiated between field and field as to the quality of the oatmeal which they ate. There is no doubt that food grown from soil in good heart in this country, apart from freshness, is likely to be more valuable than food from foreign soils.

Last, we turn to defence. The lesson of the War has still to be learnt. If all our schemes for Navy, Army and Air Force mature to the fullest extent, we will still be in an infinitely weaker position than from 1914 to 1918, when we had practically no air menace and only the German Navy against us. So we come to the question, how far can the land go in helping us to restore our national independence?

It cannot radically alter the balance of unemployment between town and country, but it can create a vast new reservoir of craftsmanship. We can still employ for the full use of our land 500,000 more workers, and in the ancillary industries in country town, factory and transport we can employ another half a million. This would bring spiritual health by breaking the back of the unemployment problem, as well as by creating work which is a man's work and not a eunuch's. It must not be forgotten that craftsmanship is not only inherent in the land itself, but in most of the trades ancillary to the service of agriculture—that is, the carpenter, the blacksmith, the engineer and the plumber, the wheelwright and the harnessmaker. Thus for the spiritual side of health.

We now come to the material to keep ourselves alive, which is absolutely necessary in times of warfare or, indeed,

of financial panic, for the country. No serious-minded strategist would dare to say that in any major war that we can foresee in the next twenty years, we would be able to feed ourselves by the import of foodstuffs. It is not only immediately imperative, but it is easily possible to store a year's supply of wheat, and even of animal feeding stuffs in this country, and it would not be a wasteful scheme, since that year's supply would be continually turned over. When that has been done, however, we may have to face considerably more than a year of warfare, and perhaps Bolshevism in some of the great producing areas of the world. Even then, with such a supply, we will only have stored a particular type of foodstuff, which is easiest to import by convoys in ships in time of war. It is the perishable foodstuffs, upon which health largely depends, which are most difficult to import. Chilled meat, refrigerator ships for butter, fruit or vegetables, are dependent on the time factor and on the space factor. A man who accepts things as they are, and says it is a risk which we must face and that, in any case, we could only slightly increase the production of food on these islands, not only shows no imagination, but proves himself to be utterly ignorant.

It is perfectly possible, in the next three years, for us to become self-supporting in pig-production. It is true that it might take considerably longer to achieve the very doubtful blessing of the standardization of bacon cuts, etc., which now obtains in imported bacon, but the spoiled palates of the nation are no excuse in failing to feed ourselves. Likewise we could produce all the poultry and eggs which we require in an even shorter period. Both eggs and table poultry are better for not having seen preservatives or the cold store over a long period. Already we have gone far towards producing all the vegetables and fruit in season that are necessary, though a certain increase should take place, as well as provision for using the surplus of a good season. At present two-thirds of the milk we consume in all forms is imported. This also we could produce for ourselves within seven or eight years and, by doing so, not only provide better and fresher products for our people than we can import in peace time, but safeguard one of the

most vital sources of vitamins and fat in war time. It will also give us in war time a large enough reserve of meat on the hoof to be independent of imports for several years. The relationship between beef and milk production, dairy and pig-farming, is very close. The steer calves from the five to seven million cattle required are a very valuable source of fresh meat of all but the finest quality.

Our present acreage of sugar beet is probably all that is required of sugar for a healthy nation, since to-day we consume far too much. Our present potato production is adequate for a normal season, but an increase in the potato acreage would give us in war time a reserve of alcohol fuel or, alternatively, a reserve in potato flour, and would, at the same time, absorb our surplus of potatoes far more healthily than it is absorbed to-day, since the present potato scheme penalizes good husbandry and initiative.

A really determined effort to expand the prime beef industry is possible, along with the expansion of dairy cattle, and would, in war time, make it quite unnecessary to import beef.

Lastly, we come to sheep. In many counties of England the neglect of arable sheep has ruined the fertility of the land and lowered the production of wool, and so of home-produced clothing. This could be trebled. The acreage of land is sufficient to carry all this expansion and the extra stock; but what is more important still, the extra stock double that which we produce at present would double our fertility. Fertility is the key to the land. From the point of view of capital our land is at present understocked by half its capacity, and is, by the same token, under-fertilized by half what it should be for its natural health.

Livestock farming, in conjunction with arable, is the employer of labour. Arable ranching, which is possible in many counties of England through mechanization, and livestock ranching, i.e. the divorce of livestock from arable, is the destroyer of labour. Put in another way, marry your livestock to the plough and you have, as you have in any healthy marriage, fertility. Divorce these, and you get the opposite, a form of homosexuality, which ends in race suicide. The great Fens require the yarded bullock

and the pig ; the uplands of Norfolk and Wessex and many other counties need the arable sheep, as well as the dairy and the yard. Dairy farming and hill farming need relatively more grass, but the arable sheep, pigs, and chickens require little land for their use in comparison with the fertility they produce on the arable fields. In either case, the proper use of livestock means doubling the production of grass, grain, roots and vegetables from the land. Farmers by now, as well as nations, should realize the danger of specialized farming. It is the farm that is most mixed that can not only weather depression, but can keep up its fertility.

All this is no ideal, but simply a matter of purpose. If we create the opportunity to produce, the production will follow. As in everything else, big bureaucratic schemes imposed from the top will not accomplish this. The Pig Board and Milk Board are examples of stifling production and initiative, and handing over the profits to the curers and middlemen. It is a minimum, and not a maximum price for production of a certain standard which will give the incentive. When agricultural co-operation comes, it will come on the guild system, and not on the board system. But no encouragement should be given to bad farming, that is, the type of farming which aims at selling off fertility from the land at the expense of the future. Thus, from the outset, farmers, except in the case of small holdings necessarily devoted to one type of production, should be as self-supporting as possible. It is only the surplus which should be sold off in butter, milk, cheese, wool, and beef, and only as part of a rotation, in wheat, potatoes and sugar beet. The farmer whose sales consist only of cereals or potatoes or sugar beet is a robber of the land, since it means that year by year the humus content in the soil is disappearing.

I will repeat that livestock is the basis, and the sole enduring basis, upon which fertility can be maintained and increased. If wheat and straw are sold off for potatoes or sugar beet as a main product, it means that the farmer is selling off his raw material for the creation of a proper decay in his soil. Healthy plant life consists of growth and decay. Growth without decay is living on capital. The

soil without humus and without bacterial life which induces decay, inevitably means poorer crops, and, as time goes on, diseased crops, since the soil is the factory for plant growth. Healthy plant growth cannot take place when much of the fuel of the factory has disappeared. If the soil is the factory for plant growth, livestock is the factory for producing the organic waste products which ensure a healthy decay in the soil. Where animals are fed from products of unhealthy soil, whether these be grass, grain, roots or straw, animal disease cannot be controlled, and becomes more and more endemic. If the crops become unhealthy, and if the animals become unhealthy, so too must human food become unhealthy, and evidence which is now becoming world-wide goes to show that the Scotsman was right when he could judge between field and field by the quality of the oats which he ate.

It is not only a matter of conversion of waste products from farming into manure, it is the matter of re-discovering and rationalizing the ancient practice of thousands of years. Economic insistence on growth alone has run counter to much of our ancient knowledge, and the scientist who has taught ranching by artificial manures has much to answer for. The old knowledge and the technique are there. The knowledge expressed in practice can generally be found among the old carters, ploughmen and herdsmen, who know by inherited instinct how best to serve the land that it may in turn serve them. Modern economic teaching and modern education alike have gone far to extinguish such men, yet there are scientists who have adopted and rationalized this immemorial knowledge. The work of Sir Albert Howard and Professor Stapledon—Sir Albert, more especially for arable, and Professor Stapledon for upland grasses—have restored to us the technique we need. They have taught us that crude manuring, whether it be through animal manure or green-manure crops ploughed in, are not sufficient. The real skill lies in turning such manure into humus. Where potatoes, wheat and vegetables are sold off, the land in turn can only be balanced by heavy stocking from arable sheep, pigs, and bullocks. In this connection, waste is appalling, both in town and in country.

It can only be a mark of the utter indifference of modern life to reality that we should import two-thirds of our foodstuffs, and then dump their waste organic products into the sea, or ruin stretches of fertile land with sewage farms. With our present importation of foodstuffs and enormous consumption of vegetable products in the towns, the fertility of our soil should be mounting yearly, instead of depreciating. There is another unforgivable and reckless waste. That is the building of houses and factories without any regard to the soil upon which they are built. The land which once fed London is now being turned into a new slum along the Great West Road. This instance can be multiplied again and again. It is part and parcel of the inability to connect anything with anything. Even so, it is still possible for the acreage of land which has not been despoiled to grow nearly everything we need, perhaps with the exception of grain.

While Sir Albert Howard and Professor Stapledon and men like Dr. Pfeiffer in Europe are restoring our lost knowledge of how to treat the soil, the mechanical technique of how to fight the vagaries of a climate which is fertile for growth, but difficult for harvest and sowing, is being more and more rapidly perfected. In the perfecting, if agriculture is given its chance, will come a far greater opportunity for the manufacturer than can be found by an export policy.

To summarize what has gone before, I would say that what is necessary as the first step towards granting us physical health, spiritual health and national independence, together with real national wealth as against the card-house wealth of finance, is the restoration of health and, with health, fertility to the soil. Good husbandry is the beginning of wisdom in statesmanship. That can only be brought about by a determination to raise all branches of agriculture at once. The piecemeal method of keeping the industry alive has failed. It is as if, when a man's vitality is very low, the doctors, instead of curing the body and the mind, started on first one extremity and then another, dropping each in turn.

If the opportunity for good mixed farming is built up, then the soil will be healed, the hedges will be cut and

drains renewed, the land cleaned for its own sake, and diseases of crops and animals will disappear. What is more important still, the human diseases which result from soil poverty, the poor stamina, carious teeth, and twisted bodies of our people will disappear, too, when the housewife learns to use the products of our own islands in the proper way. This is more important than any physical training scheme, since it strikes at the roots of life, and not the symptoms.

In defence, also, it is the starting-point of freedom of manoeuvre. Apart from inability to guarantee protection of the ocean's traffic lanes and the narrow seas, the docks and the great cities, no navy and air force which is tied to such a task can be free to manoeuvre for decisions. Where corn and animals are stored naturally on the scattered acres throughout the country, aerial attack can have no more effect than mosquito bites on the food reserve, and where it is not necessary to carry food in ships or to store it in great warehouses at the ports, the Navy and Air Force will be left mobile for their work.

Thus we have not only freedom of manoeuvre for our fighting forces by a natural reserve of livestock and corn in the rick, but we have a reserve of ability in a long struggle to grow double the crop in any given year, from the fact that the soil of much grassland as well as arable would be capable for several seasons of continuous cropping for grain as our stored grain reserves were used up. We have also a reserve in man-power, and the background for resisting the panic of famine, and we will have built up a home manufacturing industry that can turn from producing ploughshares to swords, as it could not do to-day.

It would be unfair to break off here before we counted the cost of such a policy, on which critics will always insist. It means, first of all, that finance must be the servant of English production, and not the amorphous master of the world. In other words, the power of money must be used for national purposes and national health, rather than international expedience. We have to choose between dividends from abroad and health and safety at home.

This will not be any violent change, but one which will

accommodate itself in the course of a few years to the expanding production at home, and it is a necessity which has had to be faced throughout history in any national revival.

Shipping, likewise, should not be an end in itself, but only a servant to the national purpose. That there would be a diminution of ships carrying foodstuffs is obvious, but even when that diminution had taken place, a proper protection for our shipping trade would leave it no worse off than now.

There are those who say we must import to export. Again this is a question of the purpose of export. There is no greater nonsense than the insistence on buying foreign food if we are to export to other countries. The purpose of export should be a healthy trade between ourselves and other chosen nations for goods which we and they cannot reasonably produce at home. The export trade is not only contracting, but is bound by its very nature and dependence on world conditions to be the most unstable of all. Internal trade between town and country, between farm and factory, is one that could not fail, even if half the world were in flames. It is better for the miner and industrial worker to export their products to the soil of their own land, and in turn consume the products of that soil, than to rely upon the vagaries of international finance and politics from the Cape to Leningrad, and Tokio to Manchester.

Last, we come to those Liberals who have, since the world will not do it, to justify their Free Trade principles by insistence on import and export trade within the Empire. In all the writer's experience of meeting statesmen and serious-minded men, both foreign and Imperial, he has not yet met one who, putting himself in an Englishman's place, does not say that our neglect of our own land for foreign and Imperial trade is folly. After all, Denmark and Holland have already learnt the danger of building all their agricultural policy upon an export to these islands, and they are peasant states.

In the long run, the new world cannot be healthy unless with land there goes a self-sufficient peasant population.

Much of Canada has already become a desert by the reckless robbery of virgin soil to export grain to Europe. It is doing no service to the Empire to take from them, often as the result of thriftless ranching, the foodstuffs we could grow at home. The Empire cannot remain a reality if it is going to be based on trade which corrupts and saps the foundations of life in the Home Country.

It is suggested that, for the first time, the title of "Defender of the Faith" will be omitted at the Coronation ceremony. That is understandable in a country where faith and purpose are divided, and hope is no more than a habit. But England regenerated must naturally, as in the days of her greatness, return to One King, One Faith, One Law.

The India Act in Operation

By *Felix Strage*

THIS month sees the inauguration of parliamentary democracy in India with the institution of Provincial autonomy. There is good reason to believe that within another twelve months the Federal structure will also be set in motion. Those inside and outside India who hope that Federation may never become an accomplished fact are likely to be disappointed. Lord Linlithgow is determined to see things through in as short a time as possible and he has already proved himself the kind of man who is not easily thwarted. He has the knowledge, the drive and that infinite capacity for taking pains which distinguished in like degree none of his predecessors since Lord Curzon. The "great experiment" or "gamble," as some have called it, promises to be launched as conceived and to a strict time-table. The initial difficulties have every prospect of being overcome. The Princes are still standing out for the best possible bargain, but they already appear disposed to put their signature to the instruments of accession. The die may be said to be definitely cast for good or ill.

"We have repudiated our responsibilities for the welfare of the Indian peoples and we have entrenched ourselves behind the reactionary and vested interests. History teaches that a policy such as this is the inevitable prelude to bloody revolution."

This is the verdict on the Reforms by one of the most distinguished Army officers in India when he retired last year: a great soldier with a knowledge of India extending over thirty years, an intellectual who loves India and who could in no way be described, himself, as a reactionary, unless reactionary be equated with imperialist. It is an opinion shared by many in India equally fitted to judge the situation in the light of experience and a knowledge of history.

I am only too well aware that the denomination of imperialist has become a term of opprobrium among large sections of British opinion, which carry more weight than

their numbers, or, for that matter, their capacity for clear thinking warrant.

To these people it does not seem to have occurred that imperialism is no more than a symptom of exuberant national life. Nothing can be urged against it as such that cannot be urged against life itself. Its essence is power and therefore influence—influence for good or influence for bad, if abused. It is not a phenomenon to be condemned, but judged. In so far as the results are good, life is made richer by imperialism. It is an indisputable fact that civilization has mainly been spread by the sword; and if the British Empire is one magnificent example of this fact, it is only one of countless others, of which Rome is the greatest and most beneficent prototype. Nor is it likely to be the last for the good of the world.

Similarly, in so far as the results of imperialism are bad, life itself suffers in the long run. Imperialism accordingly implies responsibilities; and to run away from these responsibilities, which spring from exuberant life, is no remedy for any abuses that may have grown up with them. Renunciation is merely the policy of despair, a symptom of national decadence, the annunciation of failing powers of creative endeavour.

Anti-imperialist defeatism is unfortunately very prevalent even among British civilians in India. I have questioned many of them for their opinions on the Reforms. Too many have answered me in this fashion: "Oh, they will outlast my time all right; and I am not seriously anxious about my pension. But I am not advising my son to follow in father's footsteps."

The old Indian Civilian had power and vast responsibilities in the exercise of personal rule and the expression of his individual personality in the greatest of all the arts, the art of government. He was recruited from a class possessing true aristocratic traditions in the exact meaning of that word; that is, he instinctively acted in accordance with principles related to universally accepted ethical standards.

If his success, great as it has been, has not been as great as his intentions, it is mainly due to the fatality

that the apotheosis of British rule in India happened to coincide with the nineteenth century—the century of materialism, of utilitarianism, of insufficiently checked individualism, of unregulated commercial exploitation, of *laissez faire*. Thus hand in hand with the good we did in India, some harm was done by the irresponsible pursuit of wealth by the new men of the industrial revolution who were not educated in the aristocratic traditions of the ruling classes. Our chief sins, however, have been sins of omission. Some of the good we accomplished was as much the by-product of exploitation in the interests of big business as the result of effort on behalf of those for whom we acted as trustees. We tended to neglect the problems which were not accompanied by money profits. The condition of the great mass of the people has hardly at all improved during the past century and a half under our rule, because there was no money in improving their lot. Mass-produced British goods tended to destroy the subsidiary productive activities of the small agriculturist and left him in some respects poorer off than before. He remains to-day very largely what he was when we came: under-fed, grossly ignorant, superstitious, easily corruptible, lacking in the very elements of hygiene, frequently diseased, overburdened with debt, the prey to bad personal habits and evil social custom. Then too, when India began to industrialize herself, for a long time our vested interests purposely hampered her progress in this direction—a progress absolutely necessary if the standard of life is to be raised in India under the pressure of a growing population—and we failed at the time to prevent, in spite of our own previous bitter experience, the growth of terrible slums in the industrialized areas and the improper exploitation of labour. Moreover we refused at first to share with Indians responsibilities of government; and this resulted in the destruction of the Indian governing classes, the reconstruction of which has been a painful task in recent years because of the inferiority complex engendered by the previous policy and the bitterness which it produced.

Nevertheless we have no reason to be ashamed of

our work. The example of our greatly superior European civilization has told in innumerable ways and the disinterested service of our civilian administrators has borne glorious fruit. Now, if the modern recruit to the Indian Civil Service has not lost altogether the aristocratic traditions of his predecessors, it must be admitted that he has deteriorated. His blood is not quite so blue and he has been gradually deprived of his power and the kind of responsibilities which made his career a calling rather than a job. His aristocratic touch has consequently become blurred. More and more he has become a mere cog in an overloaded bureaucratic machine. Since the days of Lord Morley, who put the seal on the meddlesome interference and, for the civilian, soul-destroying paramountcy of Whitehall, this process has been intensified. The growth of the machine and the technical elaboration of modern life have more and more diminished the civilian's contact with the people and so sucked him dry of much of his humanity. He is narrowed and become deplorably wooden. Like the vast majority of the people of Britain he has become proletarianized in outlook: the devitalized product of State Socialism and of a sham, façade democracy. Under the Reforms, he is finally handing over the last vestiges of his power of self-expression in direct responsibility. As a species of monarch he will soon become completely constitutionalized, as an influence for good or evil completely bureaucratized.

No wonder he is no longer attracted by the conditions of life which India can offer him. The disadvantages from a real man's point of view of a career in India now outweigh the advantages. As a mere bureaucrat he feels very naturally that there are more advantages, despite smaller pay and pension, in being one at home, where he can at least enjoy an undivided family life and the fruits of a live civilization, which is practically non-existent in India to-day. Like the gods of Walhalla he has consequently come at last to the pass of willing his own downfall. It is a case of the Twilight of the Gods. The Civil Service remains in India now as a vested interest. While it wills its eventual downfall, it defends its surviving

privileges, hampering the kind of reform which India chiefly needs, namely administrative reform. India can no longer afford to pay for mere bureaucrats what it was prepared to pay for high principled initiative which the European represented.

With the Reforms, initiative passes to Indian Ministers, who will not even have the backing of their own people. Congress, which has captured a majority in several of the Provincial Legislatures, is determined in accordance with the resolutions passed at the Faizpur Session last November to wreck the Reforms. The creation of huge illiterate electorates (nearly 30,000,000 persons have cast their vote, not more than 5 per cent. of whom can read or write) will be found to be admirable means for spreading anti-British and revolutionary doctrine. Before many years are over, legislative deadlocks will have arisen in a number of Provinces and the Reforms will already have failed there as far as the avowed intentions of their authors are concerned. But they will have succeeded in the eyes of those in India who have consistently denounced them, because they will have been successfully used to embarrass and further weaken the British Raj. In other Provinces, where Congress has failed to secure a majority, they will only be working lamely. There will be much communal strife. Parliamentary democracy means a struggle for place and influence and will place a premium on communal rioting wherever Hindu and Moslem are both powerful factions. The streets of Calcutta will, one of these days, be running red with blood. It will be seen that the blame is laid at the door of the British. Half the Provinces will be in financial difficulties with growing budgetary deficits. There will be little money for urgently required social reform; and again the blame for this will be laid upon the British—owing to the excessive and increasing cost of the administration, the high cost of the Army and of the Police, which will have first call on the revenues and are carefully safeguarded under the new Constitution. At the same time there will be growing labour and agrarian trouble as class consciousness becomes stronger under the spur of Jawarlal Nehru's compelling eloquence.

More immediate still, there is every prospect of disturbing—even though they be only temporary—currency difficulties. India's foreign commitments in the way of remittances to cover pensions, holiday allowances and interest on sterling loans are very large. The bill can only be met by a correspondingly large surplus of exports; and in the conditions of the modern world, where a considerable degree of economic nationalism has undoubtedly come to stay, it appears unlikely that this surplus will be for long maintained. Although the excess of exports over imports is again steadily improving, it is not keeping pace with the decrease in the exports of treasure which at present fills the gap. Though the rupee at present stands at a premium and may even be said to be undervalued, this state of affairs is unlikely to last. The time is approaching when the Indian clamour for devaluation will begin to possess some justification. Despite the optimism of the present Finance Member, Sir James Grigg, who is fundamentally a representative of the old school of *laissez faire* and who gives the impression of one whose wish is father to his thought, we may very well see—five years hence—the beginning of an era of blocked accounts and further restricted trade, especially as India's best customer, the United Kingdom, will have entered her period of declining population and diminishing powers of absorption. All these factors will be exploited by the Indian nationalist agitator; and it will be accompanied by a steady growth of impurer, weaker, and less efficient administration.

The first storm, nevertheless, will almost certainly be weathered. It may break before Lord Linlithgow's term is up. Prominent Indian astrologers have already predicted a stormy last two years for him. But it is not necessary to be a soothsayer in order to forecast thick weather in a future by no means remote.

The anti-constitutional and anti-British campaign will be carried from the Legislatures into the country. The new Constitution will be effectively represented as a fraud and a delusion. There will be a recrudescence of civil disobedience and boycott of British goods. There may well be a recrudescence of terrorism. In any case the

scale of this agitation will be very much larger and more dangerous than the last. It will not be suppressed without considerable bloodshed and the overflowing of prisons. Then there will be another longer but more ominous lull.

The hour of revolution will not yet have sounded. It may not sound for another twenty-five years. During this period many enthusiastic Congressmen of to-day will have deserted the Congress camp for lip service to the King-Emperor ; for they will have become scared of Socialism. Congress, in other words, will have become captured by the Left and will hold in its hand new and more powerful weapons : organized labour in a far more industrialized India and a class-conscious small agriculturist. Contemporaneously the population of the United Kingdom will have dropped by nearly 10,000,000 ; our country will be poorer and weaker ; while the Moslem world will be stronger, more menacing and more anti-British all the way from Palestine to the Indus. Successive surrenders in India will have undermined Moslem loyalty which entirely depends on their characteristic respect for strength and leadership. Conditions will be ripe for another Sepoy Mutiny. The Hindu will continue to intrigue and undermine authority, careless of the outcome provided it means the ousting of the Westerner. Our capacity to face the menace of revolution in such circumstances—even if no foreign complications ensue—will be doubtful to say the least. The end is likely to spell tragedy for both countries.

Why should this be ? The question arises : Does the responsibility for this nemesis lie with the India Act ? The answer is that, strictly speaking, it does not. The responsibility lies with a whole process of policy and outlook of which the India Act is the penultimate phase and perhaps the decisive one.

The Indian situation indeed is really one with the situation at home, which will also continue to worsen until disaster overwhelms us unless we find ourselves able within the next decade or so to re-establish true conservative principles in the government of our country.

The whole problem lies there. It is fundamentally a question of capacity for a moral revolution before it proves

too late. The sands are running out very fast. Have we this capacity? A century of unchecked individualism, of utilitarianism, of over-urbanization and of subjectivism (the decay of universal ethical standards) has resulted in the tyranny of the strongest over the weak, meaning the tyranny of the less scrupulous sectional interests over the common man and over the collective national interests. Our democratic Constitution has become a mere façade which provides a camouflage for the real manipulations of policy behind the scenes. The individual voter has no more influence over his country's destinies than has the small shareholder in a great joint stock company in any say in the management. He is entirely at the mercy of the various caucuses; and to-day the biggest and most powerful caucus of all is that small minority of rich persons representing High Finance, which knows no pride of country, of race or culture. High Finance is only interested in money-making; and failing *laissez faire*, it favours the régime of State Socialism, which is the means it employs to keep the masses quietly enslaved.

It has no real fear of Bolshevism, because it knows that Bolshevism is merely the local product of exasperated circumstances and that, however disturbing it may be here and there for a period of time, it cannot last. Bolshevism is a purely theoretical and highly impractical creed. It must evolve and change under the irreducible forces of human nature; and its natural course is to evolve back into the very régime favoured by High Finance, namely, State Socialism harnessed to some form of sham democracy which can be occultly controlled. Its only fear is the resurrection of what I like to call true conservative principles, freed from all dubious and reactionary allies. That is why whatever is "pink" in colour is tolerated in Britain to-day—and excused, however horrible, whereas whatever goes by the name of Fascism is condemned by every means of lying propaganda, libelled and abused.

This to my mind explains the drift of events in India. The eclipse of Britain in India is indifferent to the Money Power, because the eclipse of Britain is a less, for it, menacing alternative to the only other practical method of dealing

with the Indian problem, namely, a return to government in accordance with conservative principles, to leadership by an aristocracy responsible for the collective welfare and ill-brooking the usurpation of power by small groups of rich individuals operating primarily in their own selfish interests.

The battle is not yet lost, though we may be on the verge of losing it. It remains to be seen if the healthy elements in Britain to-day can reassert themselves within the next few years. The old gods of Walhalla—the old superannuated aristocracy based on hereditary privilege—may be doomed. We have evolved beyond that stage which used to represent Conservatism. But the alternative of Nibelungen rule is still not inevitable. We await, almost desperately, the advent of a race born of the loins of a liberator: that Siegfried, the final act of Wotan's loyalty to the principle of leadership—Siegfried procreated by the marriage of Wotan with Mother Earth, representing the forces of present-day realities. That is the true object lesson provided by a realistic estimation of the inevitable results, if the process is not checked and changed, of the Indian Reforms.

The Willet Affair

By Anne Abercromby

DEBORAH WILLET! It is a charming name, as deliberately demure as distinctly provocative, and in the possession of these qualities it must have described its owner with unusual fidelity. Immature, not very tall, and of a serious demeanour, Deb made her appearance in the Pepys household during the autumn of 1667. That she was born of Puritan stock seems not unlikely, and almost certainly she was of gentler blood than her master and, possibly, than her mistress. Of this Mr. Pepys was aware, for he confides in his diary: "Indeed I think her a little too good for my family, and so well carriaged as I hardly ever saw."

Well carriaged? How vivid an impression the phrase conveys of a proud, yet childish figure holding its own between the two ultra-florescent Pepyses, resplendently arrayed in their frills and furbelows, self-made, complacent, and indelibly bourgeois. No hoyden, no sheepish slut, but a maid of parts, "grave beyond her bigness and age, and exceeding well bred as to her deportment." If only Mr. Pepys had completed the portrait so well begun, had detailed her charms with the wizardry of his inimitable powers of description! But Mr. Pepys preferred to keep posterity guessing, to share with no future generation of curious-minded busybodies that memory whose radiance was to lighten the darkness already threatening him.

On Mr. Pepys' own authority he was disappointed when summoned from his office to see the girl his convivial friend, W. Batelier, had recommended and Mrs. Pepys so loudly praised. Deb, it would seem, was so much less beautiful than he had anticipated—and yet, one wonders, how much more? He says: "She seems not altogether so great a beauty as she (his wife) had before told me, yet indeed she is mighty pretty; and so pretty that I find I shall be too much pleased with it . . . to the discontent of my wife."

Plainly then, in the first instance, Samuel strove to maintain judicial calm, only to fail signally at the dictates of his all too vulnerable heart, for when he looked again

upon this applicant for the post of handmaiden to Mrs. Pepys he found he could not hope to sustain the rôle of disinterested critic of a beauty so utterly at variance with the standards of contemporary taste that he stood amazed before it. Where were the high, round bosoms asking to be handled? The generous hips inviting exploration? The bold eyes, the over-ripe lips, the cascades of tousled curls? Here, instead, was hair which borrowed its tone from the quiet brown of a wood in winter; eyes which were coolly grey like water under a sunless sky; features delicately pointed, skin clear and pale. Here was no buxom wench but a woman-thing made like a child, shy and slight . . . and Samuel loved her, there and then, as he had loved no other woman, not even Elizabeth, his wife. Nor could he sleep that night, his thoughts being full of "this pretty little girle that is coming to live with us."

Two days later Mr. Pepys "found our pretty girl Willet come . . . and she is very pretty, and so grave as I never saw a little thing in my life. . . . I wish my wife may use her well." A pious hope which the improper conduct of Mr. Pepys himself was to shatter before many months were out. But in the meantime life in Seething-lane ran smoothly enough on the surface. Mrs. Pepys, "poor wretch," ordered her house with anxious care that nought might offend her Samuel whose wrath, on occasion, could lead to a black eye and a man-handled nose—afflictions not lightly to be courted by a prudent wife, or one with pride in her appearance. As for Mr. Pepys he, on his own authority, strutted here, there, and everywhere, prying about Westminster, leering round White Hall, whoring in alleys, sleeping through sermons, and conversing at length with all and sundry from the Duke of York to Poundy, the waterman, without so much as turning a hair of his spectacular, if intermittently verminous wig.

In addition to their separate concerns, Mr. and Mrs. Pepys frequently joined forces in the pursuit of pleasure and amusement. In February, 1668, they visited the King's play-house to witness a new play called *The Duke of Lerma*, with a prologue spoken "most excellently" by Mrs. Knepp and Nell Gwynne. Mr. Pepys confesses to

being somewhat troubled by the plot as "designed to reproach our King with his mistresses," although he concedes it was "well-writ." A month later the Pepyses gave an "extraordinary good dinner" to Dr. and Mrs. Pierce, the Pierces' son and daughter, a Mrs. Manuel, wife of a Jew, and a Mrs. Corbet, but "were defeated of Knepp, by her being forced to act to-day." Having lingered over their meal they eventually took barge from Tower Wharfe up the river as high as Barne Elms, the company singing all the way, both Mr. and Mrs. Pepys being "mightily taken" with Mrs. Manuel's performance, which it appears she rendered "without importunity or the contrary." Intent on making a day of it the party ended up at the Pierces' house, where they danced until ten to the strains of a violin and therbo.

Apart from occasional brief mention of Deborah's name Mr. Pepys makes no great point of her participation in these and other diversions whose excitements she shared, however materially her demure presence may have added to her master's enjoyment. Yet now and then little glimpses of, perhaps, more significance, are vouchsafed. On Christmas Day, 1667, Mr. Pepys reports: "Wife and girl and I alone at dinner . . . and all the afternoon at home, my wife reading to me," revealing how intriguing a scene of firelit intimacy set to the music of Mrs. Pepys' voice! Of snow without, and winking candles within, of the gleam of silver and rich stuffs . . . of a smoothly silken head bent over a strip of needle-work, for Deb, one may be very sure, would not be permitted to sit idle in the presence of her master and mistress. On 9th January they play at cards, and on the 11th is made the first mention of Deborah combing Mr. Pepys' head, that seemingly innocent, and slightly unenviable, duty which was to cause such serious trouble nine months later.

At the time of these events Mr. Pepys was thirty-five. In the portrait by Hayls, painted in 1666, he had not yet achieved the dignity which characterizes Kneller's version of the same subject, and but for the expression of watchful intelligence in the brown eyes his looks might almost be described as bovine. He had been married twelve years

and had risen from the rank of private clerk to Sir George Downing, at a salary of £50, to the office of Clerk of the Acts, with a snug little nest-egg of approximately £7,000 laid away. Unhappily he had had no legitimate issue by his wife, Elizabeth St. Michel, and it is extremely doubtful if he had enjoyed any greater success illegitimately. This slur on his manhood was manifestly a source of secret hurt to Mr. Pepys' pride, and answerable for much of that conduct he was constrained to describe in the pages of his journal by a confusion of tongues the builders of the Tower of Babel might have envied. These lingual evasions, uniquely expressive of the furtiveness attaching to such ex-marital adventure, clearly denote a certain lack of courage in the doughty libertine, a reluctance to face up to his delinquencies in cold English which he sought to overcome by a method doubtless appealing to him as deliciously sly: "Thence to Ducke Lane . . . here I did endeavour to see my pretty woman that I did baisier in las tenebras a little while depuis. And did find her sola in the bookshop, but had not la confidence para aller à elle. So lost my pains."

Yet who has the heart to censure this curiously naïf seducer who seeks neither to palliate nor excuse his conduct? A self-confessed amorist, he enjoyed countless affairs with women of the town, and had lain boldly in imagination with several of the King's own mistresses. He hides nothing. The diary, from beginning to end, is a perfect illustration of the truth of the saying that to know all is to forgive all. Vain, selfish, immoral, as frequently he shows himself to be, there is no condemnation in our hearts for the sinner, however we may deplore the sin, because we realize the one great, redeeming fact that he faces his own soul without hypocrisy. And how many men, writing of themselves, would be as honest? He may have thought that no eye but his own would ever read what he had written, yet does the man alone before a mirror see anything less admirable than that which he has trained himself to see? Unclouded self-vision is the rarest of all virtues, and Samuel Pepys possessed it to a remarkable degree. He bares his heart to us and we respond, for how can we do

less? We suffer acutely on his behalf as we accompany him through the painful indignities of an attack of "collique," and equally personally we share his pride as he passes along the streets on May Day in a yellow coach, freshly painted under his own supervision, and drawn by horses decorated with red ribbons galore. Mr. Pepys himself did honour to his equipage in a flowered tabby vest and coloured camelott "tunique" with gold lace at the hands; nor is it surprising to learn that the populace "did mightily look upon" this glorious sight.

But in the matter of the Willet affair Mr. Pepys was not quite himself. His usually bold method of attack failed him, his advances were slow and tentative. Maybe Deb's youth, her delicate air, the gravity on which he insists awed Samuel in spite of himself, for she was never, from first to last, in the same category as Mercer, Doll Lane, the slightly intimidating Mrs. Knepp, or "la femme de Bagwell," only to mention a few of the ladies of easy coercion and absent, or complacent spouses with whom Mr. Pepys toyed amorously in season and out of it. Deborah was typical of the love which comes too late; that love which possesses a significant beauty denied to the flamboyant blooms of earlier manhood, or those cheap growths which satisfy the grosser appetites of middle-age. Not that the experience, deeply disturbing as it must always be, transformed Mr. Pepys, but his spirit was troubled, and his personal life came nearer to shipwreck than ever before.

Appropriately it was left to Mrs. Pepys to break the spell of her husband's infatuation, to demolish Deb's halo and reduce her handmaiden to the level of a common slut, at least in verbal judgment. The immediate effect on Mr. Pepys is very noticeable, his reaction intensely human. For, however beautiful the grapes had been as they hung just too high for his greedy hands to grasp, and however virtuously Mr. Pepys had refrained from breaking them down himself, why should he continue to look and long when they had been brought within his reach by someone else? Such was the signal service Mrs. Pepys rendered her husband, and quite definitely her insinuations cost Deborah her chastity. What purpose was there now in

restraint if all Mrs. Pepys said were true? And, that being the case, what chance had Deb against the wiles of so practised a thief of virtue?

And this girl, of whom there is so little known, how did she view Mr. Pepys? Did he seem old, coarse, rather frightening, or was she willing to be wooed by the reedy music of his flageolet? Did she admire the prominent eyes, the full curves of the mouth, the blunt nose and heavy chin? Or was his attraction for her the attraction of the unknown, the forbidden? Who can say? Deb flits through the pages of the diary like a small grey moth, suddenly visible, and then lost again. There is no record of her laughing, but several of her weeping, nor can Mr. Pepys bear to see her tears, for they are stealing, pitiful drops shed quietly, and quite unlike the ill-timed blubbering of Mrs. Pepys, for which Samuel has scant sympathy.

To sensitive ears rumblings of the storm to come must have been plainly audible over Seething-lane for a month or two before June the 17th, when it became apparent to Mr. Pepys that trouble was brewing. "I find," he writes, "my wife hath something in her gizzard that only waits an opportunity of being provoked to bring up." On the morrow her "fusty humour" continued, and in the night she rose sobbing from her husband's side to seek sanctuary in Deborah's bed. But, by-and-by, she returned, still lamenting, to be pacified by Mr. Pepys, and presently "we to sleep," but not for long, as between two and three in the morning they were awakened by shouts of "Fire!" and arose with much precipitation. Samuel was soon at the scene of action in Minchin Lane, where a newly-built house was burning merrily, nor did he return "till all fear over." But although the danger abroad was happily at an end, there was plenty in store for Samuel beneath his own roof, and later that same morning Mrs. Pepys took the opportunity to relieve her gizzard, and there was a "deal of do." She accused Mr. Pepys of loving pleasure and denying her any, to which reproaches Mr. Pepys replied with "mild words and few," like the wise man he was, so that before they left their mutual couch Mr. and Mrs. Pepys were, ostensibly, friends again.

Yet it was evident that more than the time-honoured wifely complaint lay behind the "poor wretch's" slightly hysterical melancholy, and that Mr. Pepys was half aware of it, too, although he put it down to the visit they had just paid to his father at Brampton, and the friction inseparable from the co-habitation of in-laws. It was, as it happened, on the return journey from this expedition that Mr. Pepys had been entertained by Deborah Willet's uncle, a certain Mr. Butt, at his "substantial good house" in Bristol. His, also, the pleasure of seeing Deb's birth-place in Marsh Street, and being a witness of Deb's re-union with many old friends who had known her as a child. And if Mr. Pepys revealed in his appearance during these proceedings anything like the same tender interest that shines forth when describing them in his journal, small wonder that Mrs. Pepys was perturbed, although there had been no more between him and Deb save a touch, by the way, or a kiss in the dark, as opportunity afforded.

The crisis came on October the 25th—a Sunday—when Mrs. Pepys surprised the pair embracing. Mr. Pepys was "at a wonderful loss upon it, and the girle also, and I endeavoured to put it off, but my wife was struck mute and grew angry, and so her voice came to her, quite out of order. . . ." The ensuing days must have been little short of hell for all concerned. Naturally, Mrs. Pepys could not leave the subject alone, nor could Samuel convince her of his innocence. In vain did the unlucky Mr. Pepys forswear the society of Mrs. Pierce and Knepp, and promise his wife "particular demonstration" of his true love for her; Mrs. Pepys was only quietened for a time, to break out with renewed vigour just as soon as she could supply herself with fresh ammunition. The nights were hideous with the rantings and ravings of Mrs. Pepys, the days overcast with her sullen discontent.

Deborah's behaviour during this trying period seems to have been in keeping with what we know of her. She was sad and circumspect. That she must have suffered at the hands of Mrs. Pepys there can be very little doubt, yet perhaps from the fact that Mrs. Pepys did not instantly dismiss her it is reasonable to deduce a disposition on the

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part of that lady to blame her husband, more than the girl, for what had passed, although he still continued to deny having kissed Deb. He explains: "The truth is that I did venture upon God's pardoning me this lie, knowing how heavy a thing it would be for me to be the ruin of the poor girle, and next knowing that if my wife should know all it were impossible ever for her to be at peace with me again, and so our whole lives would be uncomfortable."

But no amount of diplomatic lies were going to short-circuit Mrs. Pepys. Like a virtuous wife she was determined to get the last ounce of melodramatic misery out of the affair, and make her sinning spouse sweat for his infidelities, proved or suspected. On the night of November the 10th, having first reduced him to tears, she conceived the truly feminine plan of making Samuel himself "bid the girle begone"—which suggests that Mrs. Pepys may not have been the broken woman she made herself out to be. To say that she was consciously enjoying the situation would, almost certainly, not be true, but she was the central figure on the domestic stage for the first time in her married life, and she intended to remain there for just as long as she could hold the attention of the discomfited audience.

Thus, two days later, in the presence of his wife, Mr. Pepys discharged Deborah Willet from his service, "with tears in my eyes which I could not help," and Deb wept too. Mrs. Pepys' attitude of smug complacence, her glances of scorn may be imagined, the day was hers, and the moral gloriously obvious. Samuel, too, not to be outdone, borrowed something of her priggishness, and reflected: "I am apt to believe by what my wife hath of late told me (Deborah) is a cunning girl, if not a slut." Indeed, he almost succeeded in transforming himself into the injured party, the innocent dupe of a designing jade who had invaded the bliss of his Eden and laid it waste. Yet, perhaps, after all he had gone through, he may be permitted this small grain of temporary comfort—for temporary it could only be. He confesses shortly afterwards, in an unforgettable phrase: "It will be I fear a little time before I shall be able to wear Deb out of my mind." Whether he succeeded ultimately in this wise resolve is a secret he took with him to

his grave, and there it lies with him to this very day. But whatever else a man may forget, it is not the love for which he has suffered.

No matter what the bulk of Mr. Pepys' resolutions may have been, there was one stronger than all the rest put together, and that was a dogged determination to find out where Deborah Willet had gone, and to go to her. She was no longer under his protection, she had been villified by Mrs. Pepys, who no doubt took a special delight in throwing mud at the girl who had always seemed a little too good for her position—and, above all, it is not improbable that Mr. Pepys felt that having paid so heavily for the sin he had not committed, he owed it to himself to make good the omission whenever the opportunity might present itself. London not being the vast place it is now, Mr. Pepys did not experience any great difficulty in running Deb to earth, nor in persuading her to enter his coach, "it being now dark." Whereupon Mr. Pepys, in no mood to procrastinate, behaved in such a manner that he was forced to break into his famous mongrel tongue when making subsequent record of the meeting in his diary. Yet notwithstanding, and with that lack of humour common to most men in similar circumstances, Mr. Pepys took the opportunity to give Deb some excellent advice: "To have a care of her honour, and to fear God, and to suffer no man para avoir to do con her as je have done."

For this escapade Samuel got into hotter water than he had been in yet, and not undeservedly. On reaching home he told his wife a "fair tale" which availed him naught, for the following day he had to confess the truth to Mrs. Pepys, who knew already of the clandestine meeting between Deb and the "false, rotten-hearted rogue" who was her husband. Mrs. Pepys made an afternoon of it, and Mr. Pepys had no alternative but to "endure the sorrow of her threats and vows and curses." Furthermore, the incensed lady "swore by all that was good that she would slit the nose of this girle, and be gone herself this very night from me, and did there demand 3 or £400 of me to buy my peace . . . or else protested that she would make the whole world know of it."

Things having come to this sorry pass, W. Hewer, Mr. Pepys' faithful clerk, had to be made privy to the painful affair, and "the poor fellow did cry like a child" over his master's situation. He, however, prevailed upon Mrs. Pepys not to take the extreme step of leaving her husband on condition that Mr. Pepys saw neither Pierce, Knepp, nor Deb again, and that whenever he went abroad he should be accompanied by W. Hewer in the absence of Mrs. Pepys herself. It makes sad reading. We feel for Samuel in his shame and degradation far more sympathetically than for the wife in her righteous wrath. That the consequential Mr. Pepys should be subjected to such ignominy, dogged like a common criminal, his gallantries spied upon, his every action questioned with suspicion, is indeed a bitter pill for his admirers to swallow.

Fortunately, William Hewer's affection for his master, being stronger than his desire to obey Mrs. Pepys' orders, that worthy fellow developed an incipient blindness and a speed in conveying messages which considerably lightened the course of Mr. Pepys' virtual imprisonment, whose irksomeness, otherwise, would have been quite intolerable to that gentleman of convivial habits and marked independence. By the end of November a calmer atmosphere prevailed, and Mrs. Pepys, having set her house in order, proceeded to clean herself, "after four or five weeks being in continued dirt." A Sunday was selected for this herculean task, which practically took the whole day to complete. Mr. Pepys, deprived of his wife's company, employed his time innocently enough in "knocking up nails, and making little settlements in my house, till noon, and then eat a bit of meat in the kitchen, I all alone." But if Mrs. Pepys' reviving pride in her appearance seemed to augur the dawn of brighter things in Seething-lane, the promise came to nothing, for her jealousy kept breaking forth in all manner of unsuspected ways, and poor Mr. Pepys knew no peace, either waking or sleeping.

Early in December he was roundly accused of dreaming of Deb, Mrs. Pepys declaring that he had called out "Huzzy" in his sleep. As usual, Samuel's private comments are much to the point: "I do not know that I dream of her

more than usual, though I cannot deny that my thoughts waking do run now and then against my will and judgment upon her, for that only is wanted to undo me, being now in every other thing as to my mind most happy, and may still be so but for my own fault, if I be caught loving any body but my own wife again." But all that had gone before, the ravings, rantings, hysterics, recriminations and hair-pullings to which Mr. Pepys had been subjected by his irate spouse, sank into insignificance besides the scene in January, 1669, when, after inventing a story of Samuel being seen in a coach with Deborah, Mrs. Pepys attacked Mr. Pepys with a pair of red-hot tongs. Happily she was prevailed upon to lay them down before any mischief had been done to that gentleman's person, he being in bed at the time, but it must have been an unpleasant surprise for Samuel when the curtains of his bed parted and revealed his assailant ready armed for the fray, while he lay naked at her mercy.

Heavy with such scenes, the grievous winter of Mr. Pepys' discontent passed, and spring blew over old London, its airs scented with the quickening earth, its hours bright with hope, and by that chance which may always be depended upon to favour the brave and fair, Samuel and Deborah met again. Yet, briefly as they must needs speak, Mr. Pepys left her with his heart full of "surprise and disorder," that heart which unquestioningly belonged to Deb against all the dictates of duty and prudence brought forward by Samuel's conscience. A second time they came upon each other under the witching sunshine of April, if unluckily beneath the shadow of Mrs. Pepys' restraining presence. But, even so, "Deb winked on me, and smiled . . . and I was glad to see her." Who, save a misanthrope, could refrain from rejoicing at this delightful scrap of by-play full worthy of Boccaccio? The stately, unsuspecting Mrs. Pepys, the slyly alert Mr. Pepys mincing by her side, and the pretty, winking wench quick to take advantage of her opportunity to greet her whilom master. It is the final picture we get of the three principal actors in the Willet affair, and a memorable one.

On the last page of his journal Mr. Pepys, conscious of the sobriety of the moment, writes with virtuous finality, "Now my amours to Deb are past . . ." but were they? Mrs. Pepys died of a fever six months later, and although Samuel never married again, with true Pepysian caution, Deborah may not have been entirely lost to him. At least we may be very sure that, kind and lovely, she went with him in the spirit down those shadowed years, if banished in the flesh. Never growing old, never impatient of the stumbling steps, nor alienated by the infirmities which beset the gallant Samuel as he passed into his dotage to fall a final victim to his old enemy, the stone, on May the 26th, 1703.

Foreign Affairs

By Sir Charles Petrie

THE handling of the country's foreign policy during the past few weeks has been maladroit in the extreme. The year began well with an apparently determined effort on the part of the Foreign Office to restore British relations with Italy to their old friendly footing, and it was also sound strategy to bring Rome and Angora together, for peace in the Mediterranean is vital to Great Britain in view of the dangers that threaten elsewhere. Then, for no apparent reason, there was a complete reversal of policy, and Haile Selassie was invited to send a representative to the Coronation as if he, not the King of Italy, were Emperor of Abyssinia. Every Italian has naturally taken this invitation as a deliberate insult, and the old strained atmosphere of the Sanctions period is with us once more.

This surprising *volte face* gives rise to several reflections, of which the first is that, so far as foreign affairs are concerned, there would appear to be two groups in the Cabinet, each busily engaged in attempting to trip up the other. There have been indications of this on previous occasions, but the Haile Selassie invitation is evidence which cannot be ignored. It looks suspiciously like Mr. Eden's tit-for-tat for Mr. Chamberlain's insistence upon the lifting of Sanctions last summer. Such being the case it may well be asked why the Prime Minister does not exercise more control over his colleagues. If Mr. Baldwin continues to abdicate his authority in this manner he will find that the halo of last December will soon fade. Not the least of the world's difficulties during the past fifty years has been that Germany has spoken with two voices, and the situation will not be improved if Great Britain is now going to do likewise.

Cui Bono?

WHEN one considers the invitation itself the situation is truly Gilbertian. By transforming the legation in Abyssinia into a consulate we have recognized the fact of Italian conquest; but by asking Haile Selassie to be represented at the Coronation we have stated our belief that he is still reigning Emperor. Thus, in the eyes of the

Foreign Office there are two governments where Abyssinia is concerned, one *de facto* and the other *de jure*, and Great Britain recognizes both. There are, of course, precedents for such an attitude. Louis XIV recognized two British Sovereigns, in different capacities, at the same time, but he based his attitude on definite legitimist principles, whereas it is impossible to discover on what basis the British Government is proceeding. Why was not King Alfonso XIII invited? He has at least as good a claim to the throne of Spain as Haile Selassie has to that of Abyssinia, and a far larger proportion of his former subjects desire his return.

Of course, the real explanation is that once more the League of Nations Union has thrown a monkey-wrench into the machinery of British diplomacy. One had hoped that the baneful influence of this organization was a thing of the past, but although it is fast declining it is apparently still capable of occasional mischief. England has always been the home of organized minorities, from the days of "King" Pym and Shaftesbury's "brisk boys," but it is disconcerting to find an administration with the enormous parliamentary backing of the present one prepared to go down on its knees, and sacrifice vital national interests, to a diminishing band of discredited fanatics.

The Real Issue

IT may seem a far cry from the invitation of Haile Selassie to the election of Sir Arthur Salter for Oxford University, but both are evidence of the same complaint, that is to say, a sloppy internationalism which has until recently been encouraged by those in high places ever since the War. It is useless to think that a whole generation can be induced to change its outlook in a few weeks, and the failure to obtain recruits is the direct result of the doctrines officially sponsored for so many years by Conservatives, Liberals, and Socialists alike. Even now the Government is only going to work half-heartedly, for it seems to think that rearmament is merely a question of aeroplanes and guns, and nothing whatever is being done to appeal to the fighting spirit of the people.

The issue must be squarely faced. It is useless to expect Great Britain to resume her former place in the world unless the old and sturdy patriotism of her sons is revived as well. Many agree with this view who nevertheless shrink from the steps necessary to give it effect. If patriotism is to be encouraged, then defeatism must be discouraged, even if that means the suppression of the League of Nations Union and kindred bodies as subversive organizations. Compulsory military training cannot be much longer delayed, and once it has been enacted those who oppose it will have to be visited with all the rigours of the law. One step will lead to the other. If it be objected that this is Fascism, then the Younger Pitt and all who held office from 1914 to 1918 were Fascists. If the price is considered by the weak-kneed to be too great, then let us return to unilateral disarmament. There is no half-way house.

The Spanish War

THE withdrawal of Russia from the Peninsula proceeds apace, and an interesting light is thereby thrown on Stalin's domestic difficulties. First Rosenberg is recalled to Moscow, and then the Soviet Government refuses to participate in the international supervision of the Spanish ports. The latter step appears to have been dictated by the Russian naval authorities, and, if so, is further evidence of the tendency to which attention was called in this column last month. The advice to limit commitments in the Peninsula has also been given to Hitler by his General Staff, and on this occasion he has listened, which was not the case when they counselled him against the re-occupation of the Rhineland. This parallel in the constitutional position in Germany and Russia may prove to be extremely significant.

The results of leaving the Spaniards to fight out their own war remain to be seen, but it will be surprising if they do not favour General Franco. Had there been no foreign intervention he would have been master of Spain by Christmas last. As it is, all the information goes to show that the only effective force on the Red side is the International Brigade, and as it has been compelled to bear the

brunt of the fighting, it has suffered very heavily indeed. The Catalans can fight, but not the least curious aspect of the struggle is that they appear to have done nothing to help their allies in the Popular Front. What encourages one most to hope for the speedy victory of the Nationalists is that General Franco has never lost the strategical initiative.

Position in Spain

Meanwhile not nearly enough attention has been paid to the views of Spaniards well qualified to speak of the progress of events in their unhappy country. Señor Lerroux, a lifelong Republican and Prime Minister until eighteen months ago, writes: "There are many, (i.e., of his political associates) of whom nothing has been heard, and of whom one fears to have tidings. In the city and province of Valencia not only the Radical Deputies have been murdered, but in certain villages all the members of the Radical Party have been exterminated. At Malaga and Alicante the Radicals were literally hunted down. The blood toll taken of the Radical Party in Spain is far greater than that taken of the Church, and, perhaps, than that taken of the Civil Guard, which was so savagely sacrificed."

Of the Nationalist cause Señor Lerroux says: "I would like to make it plain that we are not in the presence of a military rising. The army has not broken with discipline; it seeks to restore a discipline broken by anti-patriotic traitors and criminal anarchists. It has not risen against the law, but for the law, so that law and authority should rule; not against the people, but for the safety of the people. It is by no means a question of a military *pronunciamiento*, but of a national rising as legitimate and holy as the War of Independence in 1808. It is even more sacred, for it is not a question only of political independence, but of social and economic organization; of the protection of home, property, culture, conscience, and very life; in a word, of a whole civilization as handed down in history.

"When the army took up arms, it was already identified with the people; and the people, without distinction of class or outlook, deliberately took its stand by the side of the army. People and army have shed their blood in common from the very first day, and with their blood have sealed a pact of sacrifice and self-denial on the altar of patriotism."

The Recognition Question

BEFORE long the time will come when the British Government will have to make up its mind what it is going to do about the recognition of General Franco. This is a question which Downing Street will have to decide for itself, since in this case it cannot shelter behind the League of Nations. In view of the fact that the Nationalists already control a far larger area than do their opponents there is an argument for immediate recognition, but perhaps it is as well to wait for the fall of the capital. Only there must be no delay once that has happened, or the already prevalent suspicions as to Mr. Eden's personal predilections, however unfounded, will be strengthened to the great detriment of the national interests. British prestige cannot survive another Haile Selassie episode.

In normal circumstances there would be no occasion for concern as to the course which a British Government should pursue, but circumstances are not normal, as the invitation to Haile Selassie clearly proves. It would be the height of folly to alienate the new Spain for the sake of a handful of Socialists and mugwumps. They may regret that the Reds have not been victorious, just as some of us regret that the Duc de Guise is not reigning in Paris, but that is no reason why the name of Britain should be dragged in the mud to suit their convenience. Owing to reasons over which we have no control we have a good deal of leeway to make up in the eyes of the Spanish Nationalists, and this can best be effected by a speedy and frank recognition. There must be no acknowledgment of Franco one day, and an invitation to Largo Caballero to the Coronation the next.

Russian Conditions

STALIN's drive against his opponents has distracted attention from moral conditions in Russia, and, whatever may be said by Communist propagandists elsewhere, these do not appear to show much improvement. The *Pravda* has recently called attention to the number of those in prominent official positions who oblige their female employees to sacrifice their virtue as the price of retaining their jobs, and the same paper declares that in Moscow itself the physical training, of which the Soviet apologists tell us so much, is marked by scandals of a similar nature.

The pictures of laughing Russian women and girls which appear in the Press of Western Europe must be regarded with suspicion. The *Izvestia* announces that the percentage of divorces to marriages has risen to 44, and another Moscow paper states that in most cases the average length of a marriage is between seven days and a month. "The percentage of working-class mothers," says the *Pravda*, "deserted by their husbands has reached 40, and the women have to support their children unaided." It is not surprising that such conditions should lead to the adoption of the most questionable practices. To quote the *Izvestia* again, "Misery is driving the women to the most dangerous remedies. During the year 1935 there have been registered, in Moscow alone, not less than 150,000 cases of abortion." All this is in marked contrast with the fairy stories which pass for truth in this country and elsewhere, but one can only conclude that conditions must be pretty bad when even the censored Press is compelled to allude to them.

The Antics of M. Blum

LIKE every French Prime Minister who has come from the Left, M. Blum is moving to the Right behind a smoke-screen of patriotism. Having sent up the cost of living at home, and having failed to help his friends of the Spanish Popular Front, he has fallen back upon the support of the capitalists whom he came into office pledged to destroy. What is interesting is not that this manoeuvre

has been attempted, but whether it will succeed. The sands of the Parliamentary System in France are running very low, and it is by no means certain whether it is not already too late for M. Blum to follow the trail blazed by Clemenceau, Millerand, Briand, and a score of others.

It remains, for example, to be seen whether the Communists will take their betrayal quietly, and whether the Right in the Chamber, even if they are prepared to support the Premier, can carry the Right in the country with them. Probably the answer lies with Germany. If Berlin will only have the sense not to threaten, then M. Blum will but play into the hands of M. Doriot and those who believe that no good thing can come out of the Palais Bourbon ; but if Germany shows herself aggressive, then the appeal to patriotism, ugly as it may sound on the lips of Léon Blum, will serve the trick. It is, from a European standpoint, devoutly to be hoped that this latter will not be the case, for what is required above all else is the revival of France, and that will never take place while M. Blum is in control of her destinies.

The Austrian Problem

THE events of the last month have made it abundantly clear that, if certain Powers can prevent it, Austria is not going to be allowed to govern herself as she wishes. The Government is openly favourable to a Habsburg restoration, and a substantial majority of the Austrian people hold the same view, but their neighbours, most of whom owe their existence to the doctrine of self-determination, continue to breathe fire and slaughter at the prospect of the Archduke Otto's return to Vienna. Nevertheless, human nature being what it is, the immediate consequence of this bluster seems to be inducing an ever-increasing number of Austrians to desire what they are told they must not have, namely the monarchy.

In so far as this anti-Habsburg agitation is not dishonest, as is largely the case, it proceeds from false assumptions. The Archduke does not claim any territories other than Austria within her present boundaries, and he does not propose, when he returns to Vienna, to take the title

of Emperor, which might justifiably render surrounding nations suspicious of his good faith. It is to be regretted that the British Press should so often regale its readers in this connection with intentions which it attributes to the Archduke, and which have no foundation in fact whatsoever. So far as Germany is concerned, it may be added that her present attitude, and particularly her attempt to implicate Italy in her anti-Habsburg activities, is a flagrant violation of her undertaking of last year not to interfere in the internal affairs of Austria.

The Trend of Finance

By Collin Brooks

THE appearance of this article will coincide with the end of the Financial Year. It will precede by a very short time Mr. Chamberlain's last Budget. It is written without knowledge of the final revenue returns.

As far as can be seen and foreseen, Mr. Chamberlain will end the year 1936-37 with a small surplus, probably in the order of £5,000,000. He will face in the year 1937-38 an increased expenditure need of some £50,000,000.

Having taken powers to borrow to the extent of £400,000,000 over a maximum period of five years, and having taken power to apply Budget surpluses to rearmament, it is obvious that the heavy need 1937-38 will not be met from heavily increased taxation. Some increase, however, is almost inevitable. The probabilities are that income tax will be raised 3d. or 6d. on the standard rate and that surtax will be adjusted to include a lower scale of incomes. The task of guessing what new or increased indirect taxes there may be I prefer to leave to the accomplished gentlemen who read the stars for the benefit of newspaper readers.

Mr. Chamberlain's best friend this April will be the increased yield from existing taxes. Growing prosperity, fed by bureaucratic expenditure, both in the defence departments and others, has not only given bigger incomes to those already in the scope of direct taxation; it has also brought new incomes into the net. The effect on indirect taxation will be marked. We have already had news of a record barrellage of beer: we know that dutiable imports are beginning to rise at a quick ratio. Whereas for some years it was safe to assume that 6d. on income tax meant some £25,000,000, such an increase now means considerably more. It is the ratio of these things which is important. Yield on the full year just ended is no sound criterion to yield on the full year just opening.

Against this elasticity of yield must be set Mr. Chamberlain's inveterate habit of estimating conservatively. He is not of the temperament to rest easy on the cushion of increasing yield, however elastic it may seem.

He will also be obsessed by the knowledge that even when rearmament has at last been got into some kind of financial perspective, there will be a call for heavy supplementaries before the year is out. As an orthodox Chancellor he will wish to keep these as few as possible. He of all Conservative statesmen is likely to recall Gladstone's famous letter to Goschen in which that great Chancellor said to his successor :

"It is a great and sound rule of financial administration to make a great and serious matter of these supplemental (*sic*) estimates, which disturb the annual reckoning with the House of Commons. It is most important to keep that annual reckoning definite and fixed. This cannot always be done ; but in the case of exception, it is important that the disturbance itself should as far as possible be definite and substantive, and not in itself be liable to the chances of further correction. . . . In the Civil Branch we have introduced a new system, which seems to require them as a normal part of our system. And this is a very serious evil. . . ."

To this temperamental dislike of other than rigidly conservative estimates, and of supplementaries, Mr. Chamberlain adds, as he has already practically shown, a non-fiscal feeling that burdens must be scrupulously shared. If he will not tax the poor without taxing the rich, he will equally not tax the rich without taxing the poor. If the income-tax payer contributes, so must the breakfast table of the non-income-tax payer. Politically, I have every sympathy with this stern code. Fiscally I find Mr. Chamberlain's adherence to it an intimation that to the small rise in direct taxation which we must expect will be added a small rise in indirect taxation on some article or commodity to which the masses are addicted. It may be tea, it may be an *ad valorem* tax on lipstick, it may be an *ad valorem* tax on advertisements, it may be the much canvassed (but not very promising) taxes on bicycles, bachelors or cats. Who shall say !

The new borrowing powers are not likely to be exercised to any dramatic extent in the early days of the new financial year. Beside the resort to direct loans, Mr. Chamberlain has the resource of the floating debt. When quite recently £100,000,000 was raised to fund a large quantity of Treasuries, it was obvious that a game of cup-and-ball with the floating debt was regarded by the Treasury with approval. There is no reason why that process should not be continued until the heavier demands for payment come in from the armament suppliers. At the beginning of the new year those demands will not be terribly heavy. The likelihood is for a first Defence Loan of not less than £50,000,000 and not more than £100,000,000. The anticipated rate is 3 per cent., but after recent experiences in the gilt-edged market it may have to be a fraction higher, probably a three-per-center issued below par. Of the capacity of the nation to absorb £100,000,000 of new 3 per cents. there can be no doubt. Despite the uprush in industry, there is still a reservoir of investment money, much of it trustee or quasi-trustee money, which seeks an outlet. While it may be true that owing to recent needs to support the market many institutions have their portfolios (colloquially) full of gilt-edged securities, those portfolios are elastic-sided. They can house more.

The Budget can thus be looked upon without apprehension either by the Exchequer or the taxpayer. Its swollen total need cause no alarm . . . yet.

What many minds still fail to grasp is the sameness of effect in a small-total and a big-total Budget as long as expenditure is forced out and not allowed to lag behind revenue. In the brave days of Pitt and Gladstone the Budget balanced at not more than around £90,000,000. In our time it balances at not less than £790,000,000. Mr. Gladstone in 1861 was perturbed to find expenditure had risen from £67,250,000 in 1853-54 to £90,792,000 in 1860-61. Mr. Chamberlain in 1936 was perturbed because expenditure had risen to £797,897,000. In business high expenditure worries nobody as a thing in itself. A company that begins life with a balance sheet total of £5,000 and after forty years of vigorous life has a balance sheet

total of £5,000,000 does not worry about comparative expenditure, although obviously its whole technique has changed.

With the nation the difference of technique is that whereas in the Gladstonian days the State spent as little as possible and raised as little as need be, in our time the State is a definite spender. Once a State begins to spend heavily on behalf of the people, taxation alters in character. It becomes money taken from the whole of the people to be spent on the whole of the people through the whole of the people. A new thing is introduced into fiscal policy, and that new thing is velocity. Money is sent spinning at a swift pace and at every turn it is heavily taxed: the result is that the *net* expenditure of the State is very much smaller than the *gross* expenditure, once spending and taxing are in full rhythm.

The easiest way of demonstrating this is to track the progress of some preposterously small sum. The Treasury allots (let us say, for our kindergarten purpose), a particular shilling to the Air Ministry, which pays it away almost immediately to the Bristol Aircraft Company. Clipped a little for its share of the company's income tax, the shilling is further clipped as part of the wages of the company. That portion for wages is immediately taxed, for the wage earner who draws a copper or two of it is a smoker and a drinker. His threepence is further taxed when the barman and the cigarette maker and the cardboard maker and all the transport workers spend their proportion in similar taxed articles. So it is with every portion of the initial shilling. Even were the coin paid whole to an Air Ministry functionary who went the next day to see Millwall beat Manchester City a part would immediately be taxed under entertainment tax, the remainder, being paid in wages to players or turnstile attendants, would pursue the familiar round of being spent on taxable goods with people who would spend the remnant on taxable goods—and nobody in the whole of that journey from Treasury to Treasury would consume more than an infinitesimal part of the nation's real wealth. The original wage-drawing functionary after his day at the football match would have

worn out a little shoe leather, a little fabric from the seat of his trousers, a little wood from the bench on which he sat, and would have encouraged the players to wear out a little boot-leather and a little turf, and so on. But the consumption of wealth would be practically nil.

Even when money is spent on armaments the consumption of wealth is small. The arms themselves are not wealth consumed. The difference between the components of steel lying in the ground and lying in an arsenal is nothing to you or me as citizens of the community. We might prefer to have steel railway carriages or stainless steel walls in our public conveniences, or what not, but we are not appreciably poorer by its use in one way rather than another. Old John Ruskin would say that we are the richer by being unencumbered by those atrocious iron adornments that once disgraced the æsthetics of streets and public house frontages.

High taxation with high expenditure can, it must be confessed, continue *ad infinitum* with all the beneficent results on prosperity that we have seen during the last two years—but . . . Under such a system the incidence of wealth will change, and if the expenditure is such that the materials used at the instigation of the State have to be imported, the old bugbear of an adverse balance will grow. That is the first pair of objections. The second pair is that some day the rhythm will be interrupted, the State will cease spending before the high tax can be relieved, or—as in France—there will be a taxpayers' revolt because the necessarily rising cost of living will hit a large section which is not directly benefited by State expenditure. It is quite obvious that the higher the expenditure and the higher the tax, the worse the chance of survival for the rentier class and for the half-rentier class, and since these two classes are the main supporters of the "Funds" the more difficult to manage will be loan financing and the floating debt. Also, the more will be the rentier money that seeks to leave the country.

With a rearmament campaign at the centre and many "public works" fanatics at the periphery engaged in local government expenditure which is subject to the same

economic laws as national expenditure, it is, again, obvious that the technique of "high spending—high taxation" will not be abandoned except under the duress of circumstances. It will be little wonder, therefore, if private investment money tends to shift from Government and Municipal and similar fixed-interest stocks to industrials, in which untaxed capital appreciation takes the place of high taxed interest, and into those commodity shares which will have the most immediate gain from State purchases and State works.

"The pay is certain, one way or another," said Whitman, brooding over the cosmic relations of mankind. It is equally certain in man's political relations. We shall have the temporary benefit of public works (armaments being the chief of these) only at the cost of an entirely different economic fabric. That temporary benefit may be longer than most people suppose, since the same water can drive many mill wheels and return upon itself indefinitely, and the same money can bring people into each other's service and return upon itself indefinitely. But when it ends, the time of readjustment will be drastic. The sooner both statesmen and investors prepare for this, the less drastic will it be. The solution, as I see it—since we cannot scrap machines—is to restore the fluidity of labour and to recognize, legislatively and economically, that once the specialized need for arms has ended we shall have entered into an era where the short working day, or week, or lifetime, will be not a menace but a god-send.

It is, perhaps, our national misfortune that the present Cabinet, and whatever is likely immediately to succeed it, is composed of elderly gentlemen bred in an age when the implications of machine production and scientific distribution were not realized. Their generation allowed mass-production to grow without allowing for its growth. Both the output achieved by modern methods and the means by which it is achieved clamour for more consuming time for the producers, and unless this is realized we shall be condemned to another slump while overplus is overtaken at a time when the payment of taxation has become impossible unless production is continued.

Canada Again

My exposition two months ago of the inevitability of the recovery in Canada has been followed by the testimony of the Dominion Finance Minister that never has a year opened with such promise. It also brought to me a number of letters from Canadians agreeing with my diagnosis.

The recovery of wheat and gold is readily comprehended, but the recovery in Canadian timber is something not quite so normal. Not only have the old customers of Canadian timber, the users of paper and pulp, recovered strongly both in America and out of it, but a horde of new users now clamours for the product. The advance of rayon, staple fibre, and that wide range of plastic goods which fills the stalls of chain stores and the windows of departmental stores means a perpetual and growing demand that did not exist in the last Canadian boom. One odd effect of this recovery is that while paper companies which are conversion enterprises, that is, which convert bought pulp into paper, must suffer an anxious time, the Canadian enterprises, which own their own timber and make from it their own pulp, must benefit from all sides of the paper industry.

The principal companies—Price Brothers, Consolidated, and Abitibi—have all either reconstructed or are reconstructing themselves after the most terrible slump in their experience. The capital structures of these companies is thus re-pointed to face the spring that follows the long winter of their discontent. With them in prosperity must, of course, be coupled the names of the power companies.

Commodities

Commodity booms never seem to strike the imagination of the man-in-the-street with the same force as share or industrial booms. But the one can be regarded as the other. The ordinary investor has but to discover from his broker what companies have interests in the commodities to discover an easy mode of entry into profits.

It is widely thought that the boom in copper and lead and the base metals is solely an armament-plus-speculation

movement. This is not so. General recovery in the United States and the primary countries is an important factor in demand. In addition it has to be realized that the floods in America and in Northern Europe mean a still further demand.

Occasional shakings out of speculators there must be, but apart from these temporary rescissions the primary commodities seem destined for rising prices for a long time to come.

Stabilization

With a foreign exchange market which exhibits all the symptoms of St. Vitus's dance, it is risky to write on currency movements for a monthly publication. M. Blum has had a difficult month, and his troubles are not over. The concerted action of the three Exchange Equalization Funds (abstention being in its way action) was never seen to better advantage, but the end of the campaign has surely been to make it certain that more is needed than Central Bank co-operation if international trade is to be even partially restored.

It is said freely in certain political circles that Mr. Baldwin is loth to retire until the American debt question is straightened out once and for all. That Mr. Runciman's visit had much to do with this cannot be doubted. The settlement of the debt question can hardly be divorced from those wider questions which affect Europe and America equally. With Roosevelt safely in the White House for another four years and no third term campaign in his mind it should be possible to envisage a currency conference within the present year from which quasi-stabilization might emerge.

Home-Coming

By Isabel Boyd

M LLE. FOURMIER, teacher of French and the piano, unlocked the door of the house where she lived, and peeped cautiously inside. Seeing no one in the wide, dimly-lighted hall, she stepped softly in and closed the door. Then she stooped to examine the hem of her dress, wet with afternoon rain and dripping dismally, for she carried no umbrella.

Excepting for the wet skirt, she was not unattractive as she stood there. Over her dress she wore a short astrakhan jacket. The toque upon her head was mildly fashionable. The roll of music under her arm was neatly mended. Her bag, made of silk, winked solemnly with one white button and one black.

Advancing cautiously into the hall, Mlle. Fourmier bent over the table where the mail was put. This table, she had always thought, was excessively ugly. Manufactured of coloured marble in a day when such tables were fashionable, it had black carved legs and a mottled top. The legs, moreover, were banded with brass strips, where they had been cracked and mended.

On this table lay a meagre assortment of letters, letters from all over the world, for the people who lived in this house came from many countries. Most of them were artists, singers, dancers and actors, who liked to feel the presence of other artists around them, a presence sometimes all too evident through the thin walls where kitchenettes backed up to bedrooms, and the sound of water running out of a tub might accompany a singing lesson next door. Nevertheless, as the tenants frequently told each other, it was nice to live in the same house with other artists. It gave one that feeling of "*rapport*" so necessary to the spiritual well-being of an artist.

Feeling the *rapport*, but also a little anxious lest the landlady at the back open her door and come out, Mlle. Fourmier gathered up two letters hastily, and advanced toward the stairs. This was not, however, her lucky day, although she had lingered some hours at the public library

after her last lesson to make sure that the landlady would be getting dinner when she arrived. Before she had climbed three steps of the four flights to her "studio," however, the door at the back was flung violently open, and a harsh voice from the gloom at the rear hall inquired bluntly: "Is that you, Mlle. Fourmier?"

"Yes, indeed, Madame Brewster. How are you this evening? Better, I hope, from your rheumatism in spite of the damp weather." There was warm consideration for Mrs. Brewster's rheumatism in her tones.

"No better, thanks," snapped Mrs. Brewster as if the question annoyed her. "What I want to know, Mlle. Fourmier, is when you are going to——"

"Yes, yes, I know," murmured Mlle. Fourmier. "Any day now, I think. The first moment——"

"You said that last Monday," interrupted Mrs. Brewster. "You've been saying it for weeks. The rent on that room is only twenty dollars a month, and if you can't pay it——"

"Yes, yes, I know," said Mlle. Fourmier, in her carefully modulated voice. "I have been disappointed. Money which is owing to me has not——"

"Is there any money in them letters?" demanded Mrs. Brewster, pointing. "You trying to hold out on me, so you can leave in the end owing several months' rent?"

Mlle. Fourmier laughed merrily, as if the joke were very amusing. "Oh, now, my dear Mrs. Brewster," she said, playfully shaking the letters at the landlady, "you wouldn't really suspect me of that!"

"I'd suspect anybody of anything," said Mrs. Brewster sourly. "Especially if they was an *artist*. Of all the stuck-up, no-account people in the world, give me a piano-player or an artist." Changing her tone a little, she added suddenly: "There isn't anyone you could *borrow* the money of, is there, Mlle. Fourmier?"

Mlle. Fourmier looked reflective, as if she were reviewing in her own mind possible sources of a loan. "No," she said at last. "No, Madame Brewster, I don't believe there is. . . . But, my dear Mrs. Brewster," drawing herself together, and speaking contritely, "I am keeping

you from your dinner. I can smell it cooking now. It would be a great pity to spoil it."

"Bit of boiled beef and cabbage," sniffed Mrs. Brewster. "Can't spoil that nohow. And I'm telling you straight out——"

"It smells delicious, simply delicious," murmured Mlle. Fourmier. "There is an art to cooking, surely. A good cook is as much an artist——"

"Rubbish," said Mrs. Brewster wearily, and turned to go back into her kitchen. "Just you remember this," she called over her shoulder. "That money's got to be paid, and paid soon, I'm telling you. Another week of no rent, and the door'll be locked against you. There's my own landlord to think of."

Mlle. Fourmier leaned out over the bannister and spoke reassuringly, her voice rising as Mrs. Brewster's retreated. "Of course, but of *course*, Madame Brewster. You are entirely right about that." Then hearing Mrs. Brewster's door close at last, she leaned back against the wall for a moment and sighed gently.

Her journey upstairs could now be undertaken safely. Casting an apprehensive glance at the letters in her hand, she lifted her wet skirt and began to mount. The stairway was narrow, and not very well lighted. A man coming down from above bumped awkwardly into her on the first landing.

"Sorry," he muttered, moving over toward the railing.

"Not at all, not at all," cried Mlle. Fourmier. "It was an accident, surely."

The man continued on his way down, and she climbed to the second landing. The door was open here into the rear "apartment," a large gloomy room, shabbily furnished, with a bedroom opening out of it. Through the open door of the bedroom a man in shirt sleeves could be seen combing his hair in front of a mirror. On the bed behind him sprawled two children, handsome, unkempt children with bright, knowing eyes. In the kitchenette off the living-room a woman was making half-hearted efforts to get supper.

Mlle. Fourmier paused expectantly in the open doorway.

"Good evening, Mrs. Stringer," she said brightly. "How are you and Mr. Stringer and the children this evening?"

"Fair enough, I guess," said Mrs. Stringer unenthusiastically. "If it would only stop raining so I could get the kids outdoors some, we would have more peace and quiet around here."

As she said these words the children in the next room began bouncing up and down on the bed with considerable clatter.

"So hard on you all to be shut indoors all day," agreed Mlle. Fourmier.

"Joe here gets out. He's got places to go to," complained Mrs. Stringer. "But the kids and I are shut up here like chickens in a coop."

"You can't expect me to land that radio contract sitting around here on my fanny all day, can you?" contributed Mr. Stringer from the inner room. "Shut up, you kids, will you?"

"Oh, yes, the radio contract!" cried Mlle. Fourmier eagerly from the doorway. "Such an exciting prospect! Is it really going through, Mr. Stringer? But of course it is."

"Don't know yet," said Stringer, studying the back of his head with the help of a small hand mirror. At a place on the crown, where the hair was thinning, he looked long and earnestly.

"But of course, surely it will, Mr. Stringer," said Mlle. Fourmier with conviction. "No one could doubt that."

"Lena here does," said Mr. Stringer, jerking his thumb expressively at his wife. "She's been crabbing to me about it all day."

Mrs. Stringer rallied to her own defence forthrightly.

"If he would only dig up something to talk about but that darn radio contract," she said sarcastically. "Of course I know he's got talent. But he's so damn lazy."

"Lazy, is it?" said Stringer. "How about you messing around here all day, and not even making the beds or washing the dishes? No wonder I can't get anything to do. It takes the heart out of a man to live under such conditions."

His last words rose a little hysterically, as a fresh burst of noise came from the two children behind him.

"There, now, the rain is making us all restless," said Mlle. Fourmier. "What you both need, Mr. Stringer, is a little help with the children. Why not start their piano-lessons with me to-morrow? I can give them an hour each day for a dollar, and keep them up in my studio an hour or so every evening into the bargain."

"It's no use starting anything we can't pay for," said Mr. Stringer dully.

"We've got the landlady on our neck as it is," agreed Mrs. Stringer.

"Temporary embarrassment, temporary embarrassment," cried Mlle. Fourmier. "It comes to all of us. How would you like me to start the lessons now, and let you pay me for them when you get your next contract, Mr. Stringer? I'd *love* to teach Maudie and George."

"We don't want to learn to play the piano," said George loudly from the bed. "When I grow up I'm going to be a business man, and earn lots of money. . . . So's Maudie going to earn money," he added with clear insinuation.

"Shut up, you kids," said their father from his mirror. "No, Mlle. Fourmier. It ain't any use our talking piano-lessons for a while yet. Not that we don't appreciate your offer to take the kids off our hands a while evenings," he added wearily.

"Oh, don't mention it, don't mention it," said Mlle. Fourmier, making a gracious gesture. "I'd really *love* to have them."

"We don't want to come up to your room evenings," said George. "It's cold up there."

Mlle. Fourmier laughed delightedly. "Such a precocious boy!" she murmured. "Quick, very quick, like his father. . . . Well, good night, good night."

She turned and went swiftly down the hall toward the next flight of stairs. But not swiftly enough to miss Stringer's comment to his wife after her departure.

"The old fool," he said. "What does she know about playing the piano? If I had money, I wouldn't let her

give lessons to Maudie and George, although God knows it would be a relief to get them out of here nights for a while."

Mlle. Fourmieri climbed the third flight with little, birdlike steps. From the kitchenette in the front apartment came an appetizing odour.

At the rear door on the third landing she paused, and stood reflecting. It was only four days since she had dropped in on her friend, Elsa Gottlieb, at dinner time. Elsa usually had some kind of meal cooking on her gas-ring, but it was a meal that could not be stretched for two without considerable scrimping. The last time Mlle. Fourmieri dropped in Elsa made quite a pointed remark about coming up to Mlle. Fourmieri's studio for a snack with her the next time. Since there were no provisions in the studio larder that evening, however, she could not ask Elsa up to-night. Perhaps, in the circumstances, Elsa would not mind sharing her own meal once more.

Timidly Mlle. Fourmieri reached out her hand to knock. But before she actually did so, the door was flung briskly open, and Elsa herself in hat and coat stood on the threshold.

"Hello, Maxine," she said in her throaty, music-hall voice. "You again, eh? You're later to-night than usual, aren't you? I've already had my supper, and am going out. Sorry I can't ask you in this time."

The speech was polite enough, but in Elsa's hand was the little pail which she usually carried around to the delicatessen just before supper for a half-pint of milk. Elsa loved fresh milk in her coffee, and she complained often that milk bought in the morning spoiled before night on her window-sill, or if bought in the evening spoilt before morning. Besides, on the table behind Elsa, Mlle. Fourmieri could plainly see a plate and a cup and a saucer.

"But of course, *cherie*, I would not dream of detaining you!" cried Mlle. Fourmieri. "I did not come for any urgent reason. I merely thought that—perhaps—later—you would come up—to my studio."

"You giving a party or something, Maxine?" asked Elsa incredulously.

Cold perspiration broke out on Mlle. Fourmier's forehead as she thought of the cheerless confusion of her room upstairs. If Elsa should come up to visit her, what a predicament! But Elsa had said clearly and finally that she was going out this evening. Impossible now for her to accept fictitious hospitality.

"Just a few friends coming in—for a little—beer and—conversation," said Mlle. Fourmier breathlessly, avoiding Elsa's eyes.

"Well, if I get back in time, I'll come up," said Elsa unexpectedly.

Mlle. Fourmier was in for it now. "Please do, Elsa," she said, and her voice carried conviction. "*Au revoir. Au revoir.*"

From the front apartment on Elsa's floor came loud sounds of revelry. The people in there were obviously having a party—a genuine party—this evening. As Mlle. Fourmier turned away from Elsa's door she almost bumped into a young man from the *delicatessen* coming up with his arms full of parcels. Dodging aside with a cry of apology, she watched him deliver the parcels to a fat and cheerful man with a sandwich who opened the door to him. In the fat man's other hand there was a glass of something. Mlle. Fourmier's throat contracted a little as she saw it.

Mlle. Fourmier did not know the fat man, but he waved to her a cheerful greeting.

"'Lo, there, lady, 'lo," he said, waving the sandwich. "You coming to the party?"

"No, no. I live upstairs, that's all."

"Well, well, perhaps I'll come up 'n see you a while later. Soon as we clear away a li'l of this food." His manner became quite formal. "It would be a pleasure, I'm sure, to make your acquaintance."

Mlle. Fourmier smiled appreciatively, and began to climb the last flight. In a few minutes now she would be at home in her "studio."

The room itself, once she unlocked the door, was far from attractive. In the first place it was colder than it should have been, for it was not part of the main house, which was built solidly of brick, but a flimsy wooden

extension on the roof intended for attic or maid's quarters. Mlle. Fourmier and the landlady often referred to this room as a penthouse, which, in point of fact, it was, but nothing about it suggested the luxury which penthouses usually possess.

In addition to being cold and makeshift, the room was badly furnished. A soiled studio couch, a battered piano, a few nondescript chairs and a painted bureau comprised the furniture. The small rug in front of the fireplace was soiled and shabby. Probably an expert housekeeper, working ingeniously with paint and flowered remnants, could have made this room livable. But Mlle. Fourmier was not an expert housekeeper. What talent she had for keeping up appearances, and it was undoubtedly considerable, lay in the direction of nursing her wardrobe, and in making pretty speeches under impossible circumstances when her heart was crying out within her, and her body was faint from lack of food. For a great many years now Mlle. Fourmier had been under the necessity of dressing presentably on inadequate funds and appearing light-hearted on inadequate food.

The immediate problems before her to-night, in fact, were what, if anything, she should have for supper, and how before the morrow she could get her frock dried and pressed and her shoes cleaned after the afternoon rain. There was also the necessity of opening the two letters in her hand, one of which she felt sure must contain bad news.

From the address in the corner she knew that it came from Mrs. Leonard Wilson, and last Tuesday Mrs. Wilson had been very angry with her indeed. For months now Mlle. Fourmier had been trying to teach Mrs. Wilson's son, John, to play the piano, but all John would do was to make faces at her, or bang the keys with disconcerting inaccuracy. On Tuesday, when he was having his lesson, his mother commented on the fact that he could still not play the simplest piece. No doubt the letter would say that John's lessons were to be discontinued.

The fact that it was a letter, however, and not a face-to-face encounter, was distinctly comforting. Also there

was the fact that a number of protecting hours stretched between this evening and the time in the morning when she must go forth again, suitably dressed, to face a commercial world. If she ignored the problem of supper, there was no good reason why she should not relax a little for the moment. With a sigh of relief, Mlle. Fourmier took off her astrakhan coat and hat, and the wet dress and her shoes.

Shivering in her ragged slip, but still wearing an expression of profound contentment, she sank down for a moment on the studio couch. Then, still wearing the look of contentment, she got up and took a ragged sport-coat and a pair of broken shoes from her closet. These she put on, without once glancing in her mirror, then slowly, luxuriously, she ran her fingers through her imperfectly waved brown hair. Going now to the bureau, she got out a jar of cheap theatrical cold cream, and smeared it generously over her countenance. Mlle. Fourmier had once aspired to be an actress, and she always enjoyed the sensation of putting cold cream on her face.

For a moment now she stood meditatively in the middle of the floor. Had the day been hard enough to warrant what she was about to do? Had she suffered enough to deserve the last final touch of luxury? After all, she was going supperless, and there had been a long series of rebuffs and disappointments throughout the day.

Yes, after thinking the matter over conscientiously, she felt that she had earned her crowning moment.

With a crafty expression on her face, and a strange glitter in her eye, she went over and locked her door. Then, taking a key from her pocket book, she stepped quickly to the bureau and unlocked the bottom drawer. Digging anxiously into an old pile of underwear, she produced at last triumphantly a bottle. From the wash-bowl in the corner she got a glass and some water.

Sinking down happily on the bed, she poured out a little liquid, added some water, and drank the mixture greedily. Soon she poured another portion, and drank that more slowly, for the liquor was beginning to go to her head. A third portion was poured, but this she held in her hands a long time, leaning forward on her elbows,

and grinning foolishly. In spite of the grin, the expression on her face was one of profound beatification.

Hours later a loud knock came on her door, but Mlle. Fourmier did not move or answer. She merely roused herself from her stupor a little, and smiled, and drank the third portion. What if Elsa Gottlieb had come up to see if she were really having a party? Or perhaps it was the man downstairs come to intrude aimlessly on her privacy. Neither of these visitors could get in now to insult her pride and her helplessness. Long ago she had locked her door, and made herself safe against democracy. The foolish grin on her face, which she saw opposite her in the mirror, was no more foolish than the smile she wore endlessly during the long days of public effort and humiliation.

For long, luxurious hours now she could be herself and at home uninterruptedly. With a last sigh of contentment, Mlle. Fourmier set the glass down, and lay back, as on silken cushions, and went to sleep.

The Theatre

MR. ROBERT SHERWOOD'S play, *The Road to Rome*, failed when it was produced at the Strand Theatre in 1928. After its revival last month at the Embassy Theatre, Swiss Cottage, several critics found themselves at a loss to explain its previous ill-fortune. I did not share their bewilderment. Though I fully enjoyed the pleasant irony of the piece, I detected two chief reasons for its inability to attract West-End audiences.

The first is that Hannibal, the main character, does not appeal to the public so strongly as certain other heroes of classical times—Julius Cæsar or Marc Antony, for example. He is but dimly remembered—from Livy (for schools)—as a Carthaginian warrior who crossed the Alps with a large army and a troupe of elephants. This sensational manoeuvre constitutes his sole claim on the imagination of posterity, for little is known of his personal appearance or character. His traits remain hidden, and twentieth-century theatre-goers, accustomed to being shown every wart on historical personages, frankly cannot be bothered with a strategist of 200 B.C. whose warts—if he had any—were left undescribed by his contemporaries. As I write, *The Road to Rome* has just been transferred to the Savoy Theatre. Perhaps it will become a roaring success. But I feel that such an event would be a tribute to Mr. Sherwood's wit rather than a sign that Hannibal, after all, tickles the public fancy.

The second reason which I offer for the play's failure ten years ago is that Mr. Sherwood does not seem quite sure what he is about. His first act is pure burlesque. We are shown Fabius Maximus, newly-appointed dictator of Rome, strutting before Amytis, his Greek wife, who cares more for her new gowns than her husband's promotion. Well she may, for Fabius is depicted as a pompous nitwit whose assiduous attendance at the Forum gives him little time or inclination for conjugal joy. There are a number of saucy quips on this topic and Amytis's hot Greek blood positively boils when she hears that Hannibal, whose exploits testify to his virility, is at the gates of Rome.

The next act brings us to Hannibal's headquarters, a mile outside Rome, where a comic sergeant is discovered blustering at a squad of guardsmen. Some staff officers appear and become heavily facetious about the famous elephants. We are still being encouraged to laugh. Enter Amytis, who has allowed herself to be captured. She is bent on the seduction of Hannibal—a somewhat lengthy process during which a serious note is unexpectedly struck. "Why did you march on Rome?" asks Amytis, in effect.

Hannibal is not at all sure. "What's the use of war, anyhow?" she continues. Again, Hannibal can offer only a vague answer. But he presently yields both to the charms and the logic of Amytis, and next morning orders his army to raise the siege of Rome.

I am not quarrelling with Mr. Sherwood's view of history. What I dislike is his sudden introduction of a major argument—the question of Hannibal's motives—into a piece of patent flippancy. The actors at the Embassy may have let the comedy run wild, but even so the difficulty remains: the audience's minds are dragged without warning from the enjoyment of trifles to the contemplation of an important matter. The jolt is too great. Moreover, the attempt to psycho-analyse him isolates Hannibal from the other characters. Very properly, he is given dignity and power, and his claim to greatness is not challenged; but the result is to make him a lonely and incongruous figure. Surrounded by cheerful buffoons—for Amytis, despite her philosophizing, is really no more than a frivolous woman of fashion—he appears to have strayed by mistake into this drawing-room comedy. He resembles an eminently sane Hamlet in a very eccentric court of Denmark.

All this did not prevent Mr. James Mason from making Hannibal noble and convincing. Miss Ena Burrill enjoyed herself as Amytis; Mr. Aubrey Dexter's Fabius Maximus was a lovely piece of vain-glorious stupidity, while Mr. David Tree, son of Miss Viola Tree, had some good moments as an impudent subaltern.

Since I last wrote in the *ENGLISH REVIEW*, I have seen two Shakespearean productions—*Twelfth Night*, at the Old Vic, and *Macbeth*, presented by the Oxford University Dramatic Society. In the Waterloo Road, Mr. Laurence Olivier showed his versatility by appearing as the rubicund Sir Toby Belch, after assuming for many nights the melancholy pallor of Hamlet. His performance was excellent knockabout, but too many lines were lost in Sir Toby's straggling moustache. The best acting came from Mr. John Abbott. His Malvolio was not the usual old windbag, but a self-seeking young man who invoked pity rather than contemptuous amusement when his plans went awry. Even his posturings in cross-garters and yellow hose had an air of pathos. Miss Jessica Tandy "doubled" Viola and Sebastian, bringing to each part an appealing sweetness. But I felt that both the brother and the sister disguised as a boy needed a more masculine swagger.

The O.U.D.S. production of *Macbeth* was notable only for Miss Margaret Rawlings's original conception of Lady Macbeth. This thoughtful and accomplished actress portrayed a woman whose

ambition conquers her horror of murder; but once Duncan is slain, she grows weary of blood-spilling, and her husband, whom at first she had to incite, becomes the dominant partner. Miss Rawlings's interpretation showed a Lady Macbeth whose nerves still allow her to gloss over Macbeth's early ravings at Banquo's ghost; yet before the banquet is finished her husband's continued outbreaks have worn down her spirit, and it is a broken woman who says: "Stand not upon the order of your going, but go at once." Thus Miss Rawlings managed the transition to the sleep-walking scene—the next, and last, time that Lady Macbeth appears. Hitherto, Lady Macbeth's collapse has had a puzzling suddenness; any sign of its approach has been lacking. But Miss Rawlings, by indicating severe mental stress at the close of the banquet, effectively mastered the difficulty. Her Lady Macbeth, therefore, was a complete and satisfying picture which, I hope, will soon be seen in London.

A sincere and impressive first play opened at the Duke of York's theatre on March 8th—*Great Possessions*, by Mr. William Douglas-Home. Though the third act is shaky, the other two show a good sense of drama and a talent for characterization.

The story tells of a young man of great possessions, the younger son of a peer, who is "changed" by the Oxford Group. He does not sell all that he has, but he tries to dispose of his evening clothes and refuses his twenty-first birthday presents. His friends and family are shocked by such conduct and try to reason with him—but in vain. It is not until he is victimized by an unscrupulous woman in the East End that he realizes the folly of indiscriminate charity. He then resumes both his great possessions and the love of the girl who has long been waiting for him to recover from his reckless idealism.

It was a pity that Mr. Geoffrey Keen played this part. Though he worked hard, he did not seem at home in Debrett—or, indeed, in the ancestral mansion. I found it difficult to believe that he and Mr. Tully Comber's magnificently feudal Lord Weston were indeed brothers. Of the other performances I liked most Mr. Arthur Powell's ebullient undergraduate and Mr. Hubert Gregg's eager but hard-headed Oxford Grouper.

PHILIP STOCKIL.

Gramophone Notes

THE CHOICE OF CONDUCTORS

FOUR OF the world's great conductors are responsible for the pick of the purely orchestral records of the month, and each is peerless in his interpretation of the work he has chosen. One hesitates to draw an analogy between "conductors for composers" and "horses for courses," however amusing, and possibly instructive, the comparison might be! I take the conductors in alphabetical order to avoid invidious distinctions.

About the time of the Beethoven centenary Sir Thomas Beecham electrified us with a recording of Beethoven's "Symphony No. 2, in D." Many of us felt that for the first time we were hearing this work in the spirit of the composer at the time of its conception. As someone put it at the time—Sidney Grew, I think—"Beethoven being, at thirty, an original, Beecham creates the work as itself an original." Inevitably these records of ten years ago have been neglected of late because of the deficiencies in recording judged by modern standards, and it is a pleasant surprise to find the Columbia Company replacing the old records with a new set (24s., complete with album). The two sets are not identical, of course. Beecham has developed in the ten-year interval, but there is little to choose between the two interpretations. The intellectual vigour is still there in full measure, and the smooth shaping of the lyrical second movement is glorious to hear.

Stokowski is a conductor with whose interpretations I quarrel not infrequently, but on the more frequent occasions on which I find myself agreeing with him, he seems to be superlatively right. Moreover, he has trained his orchestra to a marvellous pitch of perfection. It is the fashion to sneer at Saint-Saëns nowadays, but he was a fine craftsman and no mean artist. The "Danse Macabre" is a piece of frank programme music based on a poem by Henri Cazalis (Jean Lahor). The following are the lines appended to the score:

"Zig et Zig et Zig, la Mort en cadence
Frappant une tombe avec son talon,
La Mort à minuit joue un air de danse,
Zig et Zig et Zag, sur son violon."

"Le vent d'hiver souffle, et la nuit est sombre;
Des gémissements sortent des tilleuls;
Les squelettes blancs vont à travers l'ombre,
Courant et sautant sous leurs grands linçons."

" Zig et Zig et Zig, chacun se trémousse,
On entend claquer les os des danseurs.

: : : : :
: : : : :

" Mais psit ! tout à coup on quitte la ronde,
On se pousse, on fuit, le coq a chanté.

: : : : :
: : : : :

Until this new record by the Philadelphians (H.M.V., 6s.), the music had always been attractive and mildly amusing, but here it sounds positively grisly in places. Death is represented by a solo violin, and the player is directed to tune the E string down a semitone, which simple trick produces a surprisingly weird effect. On this record the solo violin is seductively sweet, but the other fiddlers—large and small—bite very incisively at times. The xylophone, representing the rattling bones of the skeleton dancers, sounds more hollow and effective than usual, and such a frenzy of excitement is worked up at the end that one is impelled to let out a sigh of relief when the oboe, cock-crowing at the approach of dawn, disperses the spectral crowd.

Third in my alphabetical list is Arturo Toscanini who, with the New York Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra, gives us a four-sided performance of Rossini's "Semiramide Overture" (H.M.V., 12s.). This is, I think, the first time that this popular overture has been recorded at full length, and many superior people may think that to do so, even under the present conditions, is not worth while. My only criticism is that, with less time wasted at the beginning of each side and a more judicious choice of "breaks," the complete overture could have been got on to three sides. Toscanini plays the overture with complete conviction, and the polish and vigour of the performance are irresistible. The recording is of extraordinarily fine quality. Never before, I think, have *staccato* chords been recorded with such vim. As a colleague puts it, the bangs are bombs, rather than fireworks.

Lastly, there is an ideal performance of Mozart's "Eine Kleine Nachtmusik," by Bruno Walter and the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra (two H.M.V. records, 12s.) This is a marvel of firmness coupled with delicacy and poise. This delicious little suite has been recorded many times before, but it need not now be recorded again for many years.

CONCERTOS

OF AN important group of concertos in the March supplements, the most novel is Boccherini's "Cello Concerto in B Flat" (3 H.M.V. records, 18s.) Boccherini is a sadly neglected composer. He was a contemporary of Haydn, and the old nickname "Haydn's wife" aptly describes such of his music as I know. There is not the strength or force of character that is to be found in Haydn's music, but merely to be remembered as the composer of the ever-green "Minuet" is very much less than justice. Boccherini was a 'cellist himself, and wrote four concertos for this instrument. I am not familiar with these works, but hearing the "B Flat" has whet my appetite. There is ample room for more light-weight concertos in our concert repertoire. Pau Casals, of course, makes the very most of this tuneful and attractive music, and is admirably aided and abetted by Sir Landon Ronald and the London Symphony Orchestra. The range of "colour" produced by Casals from his instrument is always a source of wonder, and is very faithfully reproduced in these records.

Next comes Bach's "Concerto No. 2, in C Major, for 2 Pianos and Orchestra," and the fact that the soloists are Artur and Ulrich Schnabel will be enough to sell these three records (H.M.V., 18s.) in large quantities. Despite this, I have the temerity to confess that I find it difficult to enthuse myself. Sound, rather than inspiring, is my verdict. Much as I admire Artur Schnabel, on the "performers for composers" basis I regard him as a player of Schumann rather than Beethoven, Bach or Brahms. In his playing of the "three B's" his didacticism tends to irritate a little at times. This is one of three concertos for two pianos by Bach, and is the only one of the three to have been originally conceived in that form, the other two being arrangements of violin works, and it is peculiar in that the two piano parts are so written as to form an independent work in themselves without an orchestral accompaniment. As might be expected, therefore, the orchestral part is comparatively unimportant, but what there is to do is done discreetly and efficiently by Sir Adrian Boult and the London Symphony Orchestra.

Lastly, among the concertos, there are Nos. 4, 5 and 6 of Handel's "Concerti Grossi, Op. 6" (7 Decca records, 5s. each), the first three of which were issued at the beginning of the year when I referred to them at some length. This is healthy forthright music, ideally suited to the splendid Boyd Neel String Orchestra. Would that someone would produce "popular music" of this calibre to-day!

W. A. CHISLETT.

Sir Joshua Reynolds

Notes on a Loan Exhibition

IN recent years Sir Philip Sassoon's house has offered—thanks to the generosity of its owner—many delights to the art-loving public. Last year the Gainsborough Exhibition revealed once more the profound qualities of that noble painter ; during February and March of the present year some hundred examples of the work of Sir Joshua Reynolds have been assembled under the same hospitable roof.

The place of Sir Joshua in English Art has recently undergone some revision in the minds of critics and collectors. The first President of the Royal Academy, the friend of Johnson, Boswell, Gibbon, Garrick, Goldsmith and all the most notable figures of a brilliant age, a man whose singularly sweet and even disposition earned him the affection of all who knew him, whose native dignity and real merit as a portrait painter assured his success and a high place in the estimation of his countrymen ; Sir Joshua was long held to be the supreme figure of that English school of painting which flowered during the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries and which, since its decline, has shown no signs of revival.

Of the many interesting and some well-known examples of his works loaned to the recent exhibition, one or two suffice to establish the artist as one of the greatest English painters, but not, I believe, the greatest of all.

The earlier works, such as the portraits of Lady North, Mrs. Molesworth and the Rev. Thomas Ashton, D.D., painted in 1756 and 1757, show that "tightness" of execution and coldness of tone, from which he was ultimately to liberate himself. Indeed the development of Reynolds's technique is, in a sense, an epitome of the emancipation of English painting from those bounds of convention and formality in which the influence of Kneller, Wissing, Michael Dahl and a host of other continental practitioners, had long held it confined.

Reynolds's master, Thomas Hudson, was an heir to the Kneller tradition, but a visit to Italy afforded the artist an opportunity to acquire a wider knowledge of his craft. His Italian studies, it is true, were undertaken at a time when the works of Guercino, Domenichino, Baraccio and other eclectics of a facile and florid type, enjoyed the greatest popularity, but his later works reveal in the variety of their arrangement, the valuable lessons which Reynolds learned. Technically he suffered from weak draughtsmanship and above all, a fatal tendency to reckless experiments

in the use of paint, which caused the rapid decay and disintegration of his work.

It is strange that the author of the Discourses, full as they are of wisdom and sound judgment, and the owner of a remarkable collection of Old Master drawings, should himself have been so indifferent a draughtsman and have failed so lamentably when he attempted to embark upon historical, or allegorical compositions in the "grand" style.

At his best he was capable of producing works which, according to the character of his sitters, were full of dignity, grace and charm. The well-known full-length of Mrs. Lloyd is a clear example of Reynolds's ability to conceal weakness by a pleasing arrangement, for upon examination the lady's anatomy is startling, if only for the inordinate length of the singularly robust limbs, whose outline penetrates the folds of her dress.

The "Bedford family as St. George and the Dragon" exhibits in one canvas the merits and defects of its author. The arrangement is stilted and dull, the drawing and portrayal of the two boys is singularly unconvincing, but the "rescued princess"—Miss Caroline Vernon—is rendered with an exquisite grace and spontaneity. The splendid portrait of Warren Hastings, painted between 1766 and 1768, shows what Reynolds could do when confronted with a sitter worthy of his skill.

The arrangement, with its background of drapery, its table loaded with documents and other familiar accessories, is ordinary enough, though well balanced; the figure of Warren Hastings himself, however, is full of power and intensity—this is the portrait of a great and proud man and worthy of its subject.

The portraits and groups of children are mostly well known—"Lady Caroline Scott as Winter" is a pleasant enough conceit, but as a portrait of a child, or a work of art, it is artificial and shallow to a degree.

Perhaps the most remarkable picture in the exhibition is Mr. Victor Rothschild's "Garrick between Comedy and Tragedy." Here Garrick figures as a species of MacHeath, but a greater than MacHeath since he is evidently capable of dominating both his widely differing female companions by the force of his own character! In this picture the composition, the underlying note of humour, and the execution are alike admirable.

The portraits of Lawrence Sterne, Joseph Barretti and Percival Pott, F.R.S., reveal the grasp of character which was one of Reynolds's chief merits as a portrait painter. The portraits of Lady Anne Bingham, Kitty Fisher and Nelly O'Brien are good

instances of the freshness and skill with which he executed portraits of young women—whether persons of the high rank of the former, or ladies like the two last mentioned, whom Creevey would, no doubt, have dubbed "pop-lollies."

Sir Joshua Reynolds was perfectly equipped by the nature of his talents, to be the painter of his age, and the fugitive character of his pigment is the more regrettable when we consider the invaluable record of the appearance of the principal figures of one of the most notable periods of English history which he has left to posterity.

A large collection of portraits is, inevitably, somewhat monotonous; it is when they are to be seen as an integral part of one of those noble domestic interiors for which they were intended, that his portraits are shown to their best advantage. One cannot avoid reverting to the Gainsborough exhibition of last year in attempting to arrive at any estimate of the general quality of the Reynoldses. Comparison is only superficially possible, for the difference between Gainsborough and Reynolds was the difference between a great artist and a remarkably able portrait-painter.

Reynolds was the servant of a very English muse. At times he was capable of a rare and noble dignity and simplicity, while an element of pleasant fancy in his mind enabled him to produce the many charming female portraits upon which his popularity is most firmly established. His friend and the frequent recipient of his bounty, Oliver Goldsmith, has perhaps gone deeper than any other into the secret of his artistic status:

"When they talked of their Raphaels, Corregios and stuff
He shifted his trumpet and only took snuff."

DAVID WOODFORD.

Literary Supplement

GREY OF FALLODON. BY G. M. TREVELYAN. *Longmans.* 16s.

BOLINGBROKE. BY SIR CHARLES PETRIE. *Collins.* 12s. 6d.

THE ALMOST simultaneous appearance of books by skilled writers of the established authority of Professor Trevelyan and Sir Charles Petrie is a literary event. When the subjects of those two books are people of the importance of Lord Grey of Fallodon, and Lord Bolingbroke, it is an occasion of prime historical significance. The large public which admires the work of Professor Trevelyan and that of Sir Charles, will expect much from these books; nor will they be disappointed. Both have set themselves exacting tasks, for neither Grey nor Bolingbroke are easy subjects for biography. But each has succeeded in triumphing over the difficulties inherent in his task. Professor Trevelyan has brought to bear his exact scholarship, his great literary gifts, his own personal knowledge of the period of which he writes, and his sympathy with the subject of his book. Sir Charles has been assisted in his *Life of Bolingbroke* by his familiarity with the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, by his thorough scholarship, and by his profound comprehension of those Tory principles in the light of which the final estimate of Bolingbroke must be made.

Grey was a typical Whig; that is to say he had little philosophy of politics beyond the feeling that the government of the country should be in proper Whiggish hands. He was also, as is clear from Professor Trevelyan's book, a man with many delightful characteristics, whom it would have been impossible to dislike. But he was not in any real sense of the word a great man. He was high minded; he was industrious; he was honourable and he was loyal. But his mind lacked originality, and his temperament was unfired by the spark of genius. In judging Grey, therefore, one is not judging a man who made a contribution to political thought; one is judging a man who had a job in the light of the way in which he did that job.

The first question with Grey is: did he want to do that job at all? Professor Trevelyan has given us a delightful picture of a man who really loved the country and belonged to it. But Grey was not the only man who felt the counter attractions of a simpler life in the country, and yet devoted the bulk of his life to public affairs. I feel that too much emphasis should not be placed upon Grey's disinclination for the political arena. There is evidence in this book that he enjoyed both the minutiae of his departmental work, and the political contacts which made up the background of his London life. We have seen more recently how an even more skilful public servant than Grey has, year after year, been

able to thrust sternly aside the almost overwhelming temptation to retire to country life. Grey, I think it can be fairly said, liked his job. And indeed, he would have been ungrateful had he not done so, for his way was made very smooth in politics. He had done very little in Parliament when he became Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs, and the great Liberal victory of 1906 gave him the decade at the Foreign Office on which history will judge him.

The greatest qualities which Grey brought to his office were the lucidity of his mind and the equanimity of his temper. He was not perhaps a profoundly clever man, but he had an unerring instinct for seeing the wood of the real situation through the trees of the surrounding facts—a quality rather unexpected in a member of a Liberal cabinet. This appears time and again in the letters and memoranda on the important questions of the day which Professor Trevelyan reproduces. Grey's task is well defined as having been dual: first to maintain peace if possible; secondly, if peace was impossible, to see that this country did not enter war either friendless or unprepared. The task of any Foreign Minister must have been difficult with a Cabinet neither well versed nor specially interested in foreign affairs. But Grey, in spite of these handicaps, though he failed in his first objective, made a notable contribution to the second. His task was not so much in the sphere of armaments; what was done in respect of them was due chiefly to his friend Haldane and later to Mr. Churchill. It was his duty rather to make the correct diplomatic dispositions. In most respects he acted wisely. He maintained friendly relations with the United States; he insisted on the necessity of the Japanese Alliance; he approved the military conversations with the French which, however objectionable in theory, probably saved the situation in France in the early months of the War. Where perhaps he was wrong—and here Professor Trevelyan seems to agree—was in not bringing pressure to bear directly upon Vienna at the end of 1914: but on the whole he did what was possible, and did it thoroughly. Above all it should be noted that he at no time, was a willing party to any schemes for the encirclement of Germany; for this he knew to be both unjust and fatal. And further, Liberal as he was, he knew that a disarmed democracy is a very light counter in world affairs. Especially in these two respects this book has invaluable lessons for the Foreign Policy of this country to-day.

The Life of Bolingbroke has also important lessons in regard to foreign policy. Grey was concerned with the effort to avoid a great war or with the effort to provide for it, if prevention should

be impossible. Bolingbroke was concerned with the liquidation of a great war, when there was nothing in the interests of this country to justify its continuance, and in the making of a stable peace. Sir Charles Petrie draws a brilliant and convincing picture of Bolingbroke's attitude to the war and of his framing of the structure of the Treaty of Utrecht. In May of 1711, St. John, as he then was, wrote: "We are now in the tenth campaign of a war, the great load of which has fallen on Britain, as the great advantage of it is proposed to redound to the House of Austria and to the States General." This being so he set himself to end the war; and end it he did. The Treaty of Utrecht was a triumph of realistic statesmanship. Sir Charles writes: "The Utrecht Settlement marks the apogee of Bolingbroke's career . . . the conclusion of peace was in itself sufficient to put him in the front rank of British Statesmen . . . as for the treaty itself, its great merit was that, like the Peace of Westphalia, it recognized existing facts." It is a pity that there were not some Bolingbrokes at Versailles in 1919.

But with Bolingbroke one is not dealing with a man only of executive ability. One is dealing with a man for whom a good deal has been claimed in the sphere of original ideas. Bolingbroke was, what Grey never was, a brilliant man of lively mind and great literary quality. He also was, what Grey could never have been, untrustworthy in public life and a cad in private life. The combination of these qualities make him an extremely fascinating person to study, but they did not make him a profound political philosopher. Sir Charles has not fallen into the error of overestimating Bolingbroke. Bolingbroke as a political philosopher was discovered by the young Disraeli, to whom the more flashy and superficial of his qualities were not without their appeal. This claim cannot really be substantiated, and Sir Charles is in agreement with Dr. Keith Feiling, and others who have corrected the Whig bias in English history, in not exaggerating Bolingbroke's claims to be the first Tory philosopher. Too much of Bolingbroke's abstract writings are written either with a view to interpreting his past conduct in a good light or to setting the stage for himself in a future of political power. When once Walpole was firmly in the saddle none of Bolingbroke's tricks could unseat him. But many of his writings, while not as important as is sometimes believed, are well worth the perusal of the student of political ideas. But they are not the enunciation of Tory philosophy. For this another half-century had to go by, before Burke enunciated his Tory creed in the language of great literature and with the inspiration of philosophic idea.

Both these books are as successful in dealing with the more personal side of their subjects' lives, as they are in depicting the part which they played in public affairs. Both give an arresting and entertaining picture of the man whom they portray. The pleasant, genial, sociable and sometimes humorous quality of Grey's private life is admirably illustrated by Professor Trevelyan. The more brilliant, more vital, less restrained Bolingbroke is admirably depicted by Sir Charles. One side of Bolingbroke's life, by no means insignificant, is clearly shown in the letter which he wrote to Wyndham's son, when himself a man late on in life: "I want to know several circumstances about your present passion . . . with all ladies, with those particularly; good engineers proceed by assaults, not saps . . . whilst I loved much I never loved long, but was inconstant to them all for the sake of them all."

More different types than Bolingbroke or Grey it is hard to imagine. But the student of history cannot afford to fail to read the authoritative biography of either. No lover of literature would wish to miss the chance.

DEREK WALKER-SMITH.

KOSSUTH. BY OTTO ZAREK. *Selwyn and Blount*. 18s.

THIS BOOK is described by the publishers as a "great biography" based upon "authentic documents discovered in the State libraries and archives of Budapest," and they refer to its subject as "the first of modern dictators." The work is not great, save in so far as it is intolerably verbose; if authentic documents have been discovered there is no trace of them in these pages, where not a single authority is quoted; and there is certainly not a modern dictator who would recognize Kossuth as his prototype.

So much for the publishers: now for the author. Having evolved out of his own inner consciousness, *more Germanico*, that Kossuth was for many years the axis on which European politics turned, he proceeds to adapt the latter to fit in with this theory. English readers, in particular, will be interested to learn that it was sympathy with Hungary, not the recognition of Louis Napoleon, which brought about Palmerston's dismissal in 1851, while the fall of the Derby Cabinet in 1859 was entirely due to Kossuth, who had promised the French Emperor to effect this in order to aid his Italian campaign. With such a mentality Herr Zarek naturally experiences no difficulty in accepting the wildest of Silvio Pellico's charges against the Emperor Francis; but, even so, it is a little surprising to find a book "compiled with the greatest care" containing references to the "succession states" in the forties of

last century, or to read of Victor Emmanuel at Villafranca "compensating Napoleon with the cession of Milan, Nice, and Savoy." With such an author it is useless to complain of the entire absence of any balanced account of the political background against which Kossuth's career was set.

The only redeeming feature of an otherwise worthless book is that it does, though quite unconsciously, give a true picture of Kossuth. He was certainly the child of his age, the Liberal and democratic nineteenth century: a windy gas-bag (the author relates with the greatest approval how at a critical moment "he spoke for several hours, a fanatic master of incomprehensible clarity"), an extremely bad judge of character, and a man who sooner or later quarrelled with all with whom he came into contact. In addition, he called the only good Hungarian general, Görgey, a traitor for not sacrificing thousands of lives to no purpose while he himself was slipping across the Turkish frontier into safety. Such was "the first of modern dictators."

Kossuth rendered the Treaty of Trianon and the dismemberment of Hungary inevitable by his appeal to racial prejudice in a land where the Magyars were barely half of the population. Szechenyi, whom he drove to madness by his ill-bred arrogance, showed far greater statesmanship in seeking the development of his country in co-operation with Austria: it came to that in the end, as it will again, but Kossuth had done his mischief for all time in the interval. If there are not statues to him in Belgrade and Bucharest, he deserves them.

CHARLES PETRIE.

BERNADOTTE. By FRIEDRICH WENCKER-WILDBERG. *Jarrols*. 18s.

MARSHAL NEY. By PIERS COMPTON. *Methuen*. 10s. 6d.

BOTH THESE biographies belong to that school of romantic, biographical narrative, which has long enjoyed a large public in this country.

Bernadotte, the son of the Procureur of Pau; Ney, the son of the ex-soldier turned cooper, of Saarlouis, died; the one King of Sweden; the other Marshal of the Empire, Prince de la Moskowa, Duc d'Elchingen. Bernadotte died in the occupation of a throne in 1844; Ney ended his life before a firing-squad in the Place de l'Observatoire, face downward in the mud, on a December morning in 1815.

In the ten centuries and more of struggle and turmoil which make up the history of our Western world, nothing more extraordinary

than the military supremacy of the French nation from Jemappes and Valmy until the darker days of Leipzig and Waterloo, is to be found. The man Buonaparte, heir to the dream of Alexander, who drenched a continent in blood and reigned as Emperor of the French for twenty years, was surrounded by a nobility of his own making, whose careers were only eclipsed by that of their master. Neither of these two books offer any new material to the student, and one can think of any of a dozen *mémoires* of the period which are more entertaining to the reader. Both authors, however, have done justice to the stories they had to tell and have presented them with spirit.

In the light of the Europe we know to-day these vast panorama of battle, intrigue, physical courage and incredible changes of rank and fortune, force us to recognize the price which posterity has had to pay for the break-up of order, stability and culture, which make up the background of such glittering tableaux.

The descendants of the Gascon Bernadotte still occupy a throne. The name of Ney—"bravest of the brave"—still conjures up the image of its bearer, handling a musket at the passage of the Bérésina.

The France which produced such sons at the end of the eighteenth century has now sunk to a condition of degradation and decay which offers an afflicting spectacle to those who cherish the memory and traditions of her happier days. Germany who lay, from Jéna to Leipzig, at the mercy of the French conqueror, now stands united under a leader whose career is as startling as that of one of Napoleon's marshals.

Those traditions of soldierly honour, courage, patriotism and devotion, which have ennobled the history of Europe are still capable of emerging, even from the present political morass in which the continent is plunged.

If the West could learn to know herself and recognize the community of interests which could and should unite her, then the hordes of men whose obscure and violent deaths were the price of the glory of the Emperors and the marshals would not have been immolated in vain.

A Bernadotte, and a Ney, have better things to say to Europe than M. Léon Blum, Señor Largo Caballero, Don Moses Rosenberg and the other paladins of the "Popular Front." The soldiers of a proud nation will always be able to rely upon a nobler reward than the venomous agents of the class-war, who appear to be a monopoly of vigour and determination in this distracted age.

DAVID WOODFORD.

THE LAST OF THE GENTLEMEN'S WARS. BY MAJOR-GENERAL FULLER. *Faber and Faber Ltd.* 12s. 6d.

MAJOR-GENERAL FULLER must have greatly enjoyed compiling this story from his diaries as a subaltern in the Boer War, and its pages will entertain many who will recall similar scenes in which they have taken part. The younger generation care so little for all their forebears did, that it may not have the same appeal to them. It was indeed a "gentleman's war", in that there were few atrocities and engines of death, and little other than honest killing and wounding and a good deal of artifice and stratagem. The book is pleasantly light, though now and then the author indulges in subalterns' criticisms, for such are his forte. As a matter of fact, the army of that war was a good army, well-trained, well-mobilized, the first mobilization worthy of the name ever carried out, and it was well suited to *grande guerre* of the period. Had our generals been half as ready to lose men as they were in the World War, we should probably have walked through in three months. Nor does the staff quite deserve all it gets, and it did its work well, until it was diluted a dozen times over, under the stress of expansion, by the countless untrained jacks-in-office of which the General tells amusing stories. South Africa was largely in its early days a war of dusty trekking, alleviated by the many little incidents that he recounts. The story of the Blockhouse Lines is well told, and worth reading for both instruction and interest. They were a big thing in their conception, and erecting, almost the first time that some attempt was made to bring the resources of modern industrial life into the service of war. *Bethune, His Story*, is a very readable chapter, and when young Fuller becomes one of the "Ruddy Ikonas," otherwise joins the Mounted Infantry, and still better has a corps of scouts, incidents begin to hum, and the reminiscences grow more stirring, and you begin to enjoy reading them as much as the writer in setting them down. What perhaps is not explained to a forgetful generation is that this long war had two parts: first the war of defeat, with something of modern war about it; and then to every one's chagrin, and to the Boers' own undoing, the long stage of guerilladom which destroyed the whole countryside. John Bull, for all his good nature and his stupidity, and this "gentleman's war," knew in his heart that war is a cruel, fierce thing and must be waged to the bitter end. Poor Piet got it all right, for the said John generally finishes. That is why it never pays in the end to poke fun at him, as some of our neighbours are thinking now. Thank you, *mon général*, for a charming book that strikes old broken strings to melody.

SIR GEORGE MACMUNN.

MESOPOTAMIA—THE LAST PHASE. BY LT.-COL. A. H. BURNE, D.S.O. *Gale & Polden, Ltd.* 5s.

WE ARE most of us remarkably ignorant, and really it is not our fault, of the closing phases of the Mesopotamia Campaign in the Great War. The disaster of Kut el Amara and Sir Stanley Maude's brilliant capture of Baghdad received a good deal of lime-light, but the further operations on the Diyala and the Tigris were, comparatively speaking, ignored.

Since, from the military point of view, they were probably the most interesting of the operations undertaken in Mesopotamia, this is to be regretted and therefore we are ready to welcome Colonel Burne's interesting book. In it he traces the chief events of this campaign, which was opened by Sir Stanley Maude and brought to a triumphant conclusion, after that great commander's death, by Sir W. R. Marshall.

Far too often books on military operations are dull as ditch water, and the reader is apt to seek consolation in the reflection that this must of necessity be so. *Mesopotamia: The Last Phase*, explodes this theory once and for all, since the author succeeds in being readable, lucid and instructive. He has recounted dry-as-dust facts with a surprisingly light touch and his criticisms, though frank enough, are never unkind. He pays a striking tribute to the skill of the Turkish commanders and the fighting qualities displayed by the Anatolian peasant.

A military lesson of great importance can be learned by a study of the campaign. It is this. Large bodies of men should not be kept in reserve at a distance from the battle line. Those generals who pressed the attack with all their might, throwing, if necessary, their last man into the front line achieved by far the most successful results.

The book is well printed and, a matter of great importance, the numerous maps are excellent.

F. H. MELLOR.

FRANCE: A COMPANION TO FRENCH STUDIES. Edited by PROF. RITCHIE. *Methuen*, 16s. net.

WHY IN so many of our universities are foreign literatures treated as museum pieces, divorced from any study of the country concerned? Why, again, is the fascinating development of the language as a changing mirror of an ever-deepening and expanding civilization confined to a soul-destroying study of linguistic morphology to

which only a real grip of practical phonetics can give meaning and significance—a *damnosa hæreditas* that dates from 1870, when the Prussian schoolmaster became the beau-ideal of academic England and America? Our unfortunate students are still compelled, as Aldous Huxley has said, blindly “to mug up” other people’s judgments, instead of using past and especially present literature (the latter generally taboo) to “find themselves” and fit themselves for the appalling problems of the present. On all sides the spirit of inquiry, the passion to know where one is and where one is going is clamant among the younger generation of to-day, not merely among the educated, but also the half-educated. And to whom do the latter go? Naturally, not to the word-chopping philosophers, or even the theologians, but to the novelists and, for preference, to the best-sellers, and especially the popular female writers. Practically all the papers “with the largest circulation” have a column in which a “mother confessor” conducts a serious discussion with her readers, no longer merely on questions of cookery or cosmetics, but on every imaginable ethical problem under the sun. J. B. Priestley has already remarked on this portent. It is therefore with the greatest pleasure that one welcomes the appearance of Prof. Ritchie’s “Companion to French Studies.” Here is a book that deals briefly, but adequately, with origins, skips over the Middle Ages, and comes at once to the beginnings of Modern France in the seventeenth century, interweaving at every point history with literature, not forgetting the arts, French institutions and modern politics, with a special chapter on French literature to-day—its trends and its problems. It is the antithesis of the methods summed up in the phrase “1066 and all that.” Past literature is not treated as the mummified and desiccated thing so dear to the academic soul, but as an integral part of an ever-proceeding process which throws light on the culture and civilization of the France of our times. There may be omissions, such as a definite chapter on French science, and its peculiarly French qualities, but this is probably due to a laudable desire to keep the book within bounds. The volume is indeed indispensable to the student, but it should also prove an invaluable guide to those who want to understand France, and not least the profound differences which separate the two principal freedom-loving nations in the West, the only ones to whom freedom is not an intoxicating drink, but the elixir of life, because they are really the two most *conservative* nations in Europe, as any thoughtful critic must admit who looks below mere labels.

CLOUDESLEY BRERETON.

GREAT FARMERS. By PROF. J. A. SCOTT WATSON AND M. E. HOBBS.
Selwyn & Blount. 12s. 6d.

Great Farmers is a fascinating book. Although it is written in a popular vein it is a classic in the sense that it is a permanent book of reference. Twice since the reviewer has been in possession of a copy he has referred to it, and often in the past he remembers being at a loss for information about various of our breeds that is contained in its pages. It is surprising that never before has justice been done to the human aspect of British Agriculture.

The richness of our farming is still in its diversity and in the past the factor that made it supreme in the world was the provision of perfected stock and strain to suit every requirement of soil and climate in the temperate zones. From the amalgamation of original stocks closely bred in confined localities our great breeds emerged. To-day there are few districts that have not left their hall-mark on the animal population of the world. The white-faced steer of the Wye Valley and the compact black cattle of Angus have stocked half the grazings of five continents. The chalk and limestone hills with their improved flocks have raised the quality of sheep in the farthest lands and produced the prime joints that are to-day available to the scantiest purse. Only in pigs did we linger long, and eventually find salvation in China; although breeders have been busy of recent years trying to lose that surplus fat the Chinaman had so carefully nurtured. This story would be dull and bucolic without the human incident that underlies it. *Great Farmers* tells the tale of the men who struggled to produce this real and lasting wealth; of the painstaking genealogists, Bakewell and Bates, the athletic and thriftless Captain Barclay, Cruickshank the cautious Quaker, and the Keighley weaver who produced the ancestor of the Large White pig on the savings from his meagre wages.

The pages dealing with the antiquity of the breeds are full of information. There is the Herdwick sheep who owes his origin to a shipwreck on the Cumberland coast, and the pure Norfolk, who is now extinct, as the last flock was swept out to sea by a receding tide. Michael Drayton sang in his *Polybion* the praises of the fat little Ryeland who has been considered a worthy rival of the famous Spanish Merino. Many farmers have never heard of Gloucestershire cattle, but they still grace the glades of Badminton and other homes in that county and must be among the oldest breeds in Great Britain. Then again there is a store of anecdote. We read of the desperate efforts of Cruickshank to get a stock bull that begot in his eighth year the famous beef shorthorn sire

optimistically named Champion of England. We hear of the acrimonious dispute that waged over the white marking of the Herefords' head and follow George Coates and his white cob on their rural journeyings to compile the Shorthorn herd-book.

The story of drainage and fertilization is a section in itself. Engineering and invention is another topic. Many people would hardly guess that about the only mechanism on the early binders that did not go wrong was the ingenious knotter. However, knowledge is not wisdom and a mass of information will not justify a book the values of which are unsound. This is a sound book, sane, balanced and hopeful. An interrupted excerpt from the last chapter will speak for itself.

"It is a common error to suppose that the British farmer is inherently unprogressive and unenlightened. The real fact of the matter is that, until he had the heart knocked out of him by the years that began in 1879, his skill and leadership were recognized throughout the world. . . . During the few brief years that began in 1914 he found himself suddenly again a person of importance; but the episode was soon forgotten. . . .

"Again the citizens of the United States are alarmed to-day because they see millions of acres of their rich soil turning to desert. They realize that the catastrophe is of their own making, for they have failed to understand their land, or even to do their plain duty by it.

"The damage can be largely repaired; we have tools and resources that even Mechi, in his wildest dreams, never imagined. We can drain and lime again, mend the fences and rebuild the steadings. And when we have finished the task in our home paddocks we shall still find plenty to do in the outlying field of the Empire."

RUSTICUS

SAFE CHILDBIRTH: THE THREE ESSENTIALS. BY KATHLEEN O. VAUGHAN, M.B. *Baillere, Tindall and Cox, 1937. Pp. 154, with 49 figs. 7s. 6d.*

DR. VAUGHAN'S book, despite its general excellence, reveals many surprising omissions. She does not discuss in any detail, for instance, the effect of the relative senility of the average English mother at the birth of her first child. She has not reflected on the probable impairment of function through other than mechanical influences; for even her valuable remarks on teeth and diet ultimately have the pelvis in view. Nor has she dwelt on the possible dislocation of the reflexes concerned with childbirth by subjective conditions, such as fear, anxiety, or inhibitory and repressive disturbances. But all she does say on the subject of the pelvis and its shape is, I believe, incontestable and often original.

Her three principal claims are that difficult childbirth is caused by :

- (1) The shape of the pelvic brim, which should be round but which in civilized women has become oval.
- (2) Rigidity of the pelvic joints, and
- (3) The wrong posture adopted in childbirth.

She appears to have come to these conclusions by actual observation of the phenomenon of childbirth among women of almost every class and clime. She has been a wide traveller, and it is to her enormous credit that for years she has been concentrating on a problem—difficult childbirth—which is too often taken for granted by her fellow graduates, and which, particularly at the present moment, in the face of the universal flight from motherhood in Europe, is of paramount importance.

Only in regard to her third claim do I venture to join issue with her. It would take too long to discuss it adequately ; but as she seems to set great store by her discovery and it looms prominently in her treatise, it cannot be altogether passed over. Suffice it to say, then, that while I disassociate myself from Dr. A. J. Hawes's criticism of it (*Brit. Med. Journ.*, 14.1.33), I would nevertheless point out that a long study of parturition in animals—and we have been animals for many more millions of years than we have been humans—makes it impossible for me to accept her theory. Apart, however, from whether in this matter she is justified or not, her book should be welcome and widely read. It is a bold and illuminating advance in the only right direction—that of normalizing a primitive function which has comparatively recently acquired many abnormal features. The book is, moreover, highly readable, attractively produced, and the illustrations are helpful and often beautiful.

ANTHONY M. LUDOVICI.

THE GOVERNMENT OF NORTHERN IRELAND. By NICHOLAS MANSERGH. *George Allen and Unwin.* 12s. 6d.

IN 1920 local self-government in the form commonly known as devolution was granted to Northern Ireland. Conceived as a novel method of solving a grave political question, this remarkable constitutional experiment has now been in operation for more than fifteen years ; and, although it has betrayed many shortcomings, it must be admitted that it has on the whole served the purpose for which it was created, particularly when it is remembered that from the outset the scales were weighted against its success.

Doctor Mansergh in his book examines with considerable skill and, I may add, commendable patience, the practical working of

this experiment. He gives a very fair account of the Ulster question and its history. He carefully analyses the relations—political, administrative, financial—existing between the Imperial and subordinate parliaments, and discusses the powers and personnel of the local legislature.

More difficult still, he outlines in a spirit of real impartiality the achievements and aims of the rival political parties and factions, and he indicates the preponderance of the dominant Protestant influence in public affairs. In his final chapters the author explains the merits and defects of devolution in the light of experience in Northern Ireland and considers the desirability of a similar grant to Scotland and Wales.

There is little that I should care to criticize in this book, which must surely rank as the leading, nay, the only, authority on its subject. One or two aspects of local government, notably education, might possibly have been treated rather more fully. What were the reasons, for instance, which led to the resignation of the first Education Minister? Again, in his otherwise admirable chapter on the electoral system, I do not think that Doctor Mansergh sufficiently appreciates the fact that the Roman Catholic vote in Ulster is largely rendered nugatory by the deft "jerrymandering" of constituencies and territorial boundaries which has taken place. Nor in his forecast of the future does he perhaps altogether realize the difficulties which must result from the rapidly increasing Catholic population and immigration from the South. Nevertheless, this is an excellently written book, which has supplied a long-felt want in British Constitutional history.

H. MONTGOMERY HYDE.

PRESENT INDICATIVE. BY NOEL COWARD. *Heinemann*, 12s. 6d.

IN THE popular view, Mr. Noel Coward burst upon the London theatre from nowhere soon after the War, and has since passed jauntily from success to success. It is said that he has been unreasonably lucky, that he has won the glittering prizes of the stage too easily. This carping legend has frequently been shaken, but never quite destroyed; it has been left to Mr. Coward himself to strike the final blow with *Present Indicative*.

Many readers of this autobiography will probably be surprised to learn that the darling of "the gods" and of the stalls underwent years of hard dramatic training. Here is little Noel glad to appear in a children's play at a salary of a guinea and a half a week; proud to have a one-line part in a Charles Hawtrey production; excited at being engaged as "Slightly" in *Peter Pan*. When, in 1917, he

is introduced to Mr. Ivor Novello at the Midland Hotel, Manchester, he envies him "his looks, his personality, his assured position, his dinner clothes, his bedroom and bath." Meanwhile, Mr. Coward's mother, tired of poverty-stricken gentility, opens a lodging-house in Ebury Street. The glittering prizes are still some way off.

When the first comes, it is but a consolation award. In July, 1920, *I'll Leave it to You* opens triumphantly at the New Theatre, but survives no more than five weeks. Bravely, Mr. Coward sails for the United States "with a bundle of manuscripts, a one-way ticket, and only seventeen pounds to spare." Despite the kindness of friends, he is soon penniless in New York, and has to steel himself to borrow twenty dollars from Miss Lynn Fontanne. Then his luck changes, and he is paid five hundred dollars for turning *I'll Leave it to You* into a short story. "Swooning with surprise," Miss Fontanne sees her money again.

Back in London, Mr. Coward appears in his play, *The Young Idea*. Its run is short, but he has a success with the revue, *London Calling*. Then comes *The Vortex*. Its production is made possible by Mr. Michael Arlen, to whom Mr. Coward is forced to appeal for a loan of £200. The piece draws the town, and presently its author sees his *Fallen Angels*, *On With the Dance* and *The Vortex* all running at once. *Hay Fever*, *Easy Virtue*, *The Queen was in the Parlour* and *The Marquise* follow. The glittering prizes are his at last.

Suddenly they are snatched away again. *Home Chat* fails amid catcalls from gallery and pit; *Sirocco* is greeted with venomous abuse. But Mr. Coward comes back with *This Year of Grace*, and progresses confidently, by way of *Bitter-Sweet* and *Private Lives*, to *Cavalcade*. The book ends with the visit to that production of King George V and Queen Mary—"a tremendous night for me; a gratifying theatrical flourish to my twenty-one years of theatre."

If, in those twenty-one years, Mr. Coward had merely enjoyed the series of easy triumphs which many still attribute to him, he could not have produced so fascinating an autobiography. On his setbacks he writes with pleasant candour; on his successes, with decent modesty. Each one of his four hundred pages is decorated with unrestrained wit. Only the foolish reader will skip a word.

PHILIP STOCKIL.

I DECORATE MY HOME. By DEREK PATMORE. Putnam. 8s. 6d.

THE AUTHOR has written a useful and readable book which will appeal particularly to the Londoner who, with limited means, desires to decorate a flat or small house in such a way as to express

something of his own personality in the decoration. It is useful because the author does not dogmatise on taste. At the most, he generally points the way by suggestion, or if he describes the decoration of his house he does so more with the object of encouraging others to think out their own schemes of decoration than that they should blindly copy the schemes he puts forward. He quite rightly protests against the two dominant evils of modern decoration—the tendency, on the one hand, wholeheartedly and shamelessly to imitate previous periods (thus betraying an absolute lack of creative ability), and on the other hand, the excessive influence wielded by mercenary manufacturers who are prepared to foist on a willing public goods devoid of any conceivable merit.

Mr. Patmore has woven his schemes into an artistic framework. Anxious to decorate his own house, he seeks advice from an elderly woman friend, and together they discuss his plans which are developed and explained, for the most part, in the course of their conversations. Now and then he departs from this framework, but only to give us, in the shape of little essays, his theories on such subjects as the Secret of Colour and the Choosing of Fabrics and Furniture in Relation to Colour Values.

The book will satisfy those who are fond of chromium-plated furniture and fitments; who like their rooms planned according to simple, rather classical designs; and who are fond of gentle, soft colours. But neither those who dream nostalgically of earlier periods, nor those who worship comfort for its own sake will find much to please them here. Mr. Patmore does, however, make use of certain features of previous periods, blending these into his more modern schemes. The book, illustrated with good photographs and drawings, may help to free modern decoration from many of its worse features and shams.

IAN GREENLEES.

ESSAYS IN MUSICAL ANALYSIS—VOL. 4, ILLUSTRATIVE MUSIC. BY DONALD FRANCIS TOVEY. *Oxford University Press.* 10s. 6d.

THE FOURTH volume of Professor Tovey's analyses is, I think, even more fascinating than its predecessors, for the infinite variety of form and content to be found in "illustrative music" gives full scope to the versatility and reconditeness of the author's knowledge and his superb wit.

Criticism on the score of choice of material is forestalled in the author's introduction by the reminder that the contents of the volume have been "selected by the accidents of concert-giving under difficulties." The analyses were originally written for the

Reid Concerts in Edinburgh, and, to take one obvious omission, Professor Tovey specifically declines to deal with Mahler until his orchestra is established with six horns and four-fold wind. There are many other equally obvious gaps but, while it is not possible to say that the omissions are outweighed by the inclusion of a number of lesser-known compositions, compensations are to be found in Bantock's *Dante and Beatrice*, Joachim's *Overture to a Comedy by Gozzi*, Reger's *Four Tone Poems after Böcklin*, Hindemith's *Chamber Music*, No. 1, and elsewhere. A supplementary volume or volumes giving us some Sibelius, some Tchaikovsky, more Strauss, more Berlioz, more of Rimsky-Korsakov and the other Russians, and so on, would be the most satisfactory solution. Perhaps we may venture to hope for this, despite Professor Tovey's categorical statement that a "Reid Concert is the only mechanism that will extract an analytical essay" from him!

Of supreme interest is the essay dealing with Sir Edward Elgar's *Falstaff*, because it was written before Sir Donald Tovey had read Elgar's own analysis, and is reprinted exactly as written with the addition of footnotes giving the composer's own explanations for comparison. When each read the other's analysis there must have been two equally proud men for, armed only with Elgar's score and his own knowledge of Shakespeare, Professor Tovey indicates the composer's literary allusions with remarkable success and accuracy.

Another extraordinarily valuable essay is that giving a minutely detailed comparison of the Beethoven *Leonora* overtures Nos. 2 and 3. One is also grateful for the whole-hearted castigation of the librettists who have done their best to obscure so much first-class music. Schubert and Weber are singled out as having suffered severely in this respect, and a special plea is put forward for the Lauckner-edited version of Weber's *Euryanthe*. I fear it is too late to urge the inclusion of this in the Covent Garden season for the Coronation year, but it would seem to be an admirable choice in every way.

It is rare to find a book that one can recommend equally to technician and tyro, but here is one.

W. A. CHISLETT.

MY FLYING LIFE. By SIR CHARLES KINGSFORD-SMITH. With a preface by COMMANDER GEOFFREY RAWSON. *Melrose*. 16s.

THE AIR ANNUAL OF THE BRITISH EMPIRE, 1937. *Pitman*. 21s.

THE DEEDS of famous aeronauts are very familiar, their characters much less so. Plainly, they all share certain qualities—courage,

patience, endurance—but their individual traits remain hidden. Those inarticulate little speeches which they are accustomed to gasp into a microphone at the end of a record flight certainly do not reveal their true personalities to an eager public. And so an autobiography such as *My Flying Life* should not pass unnoticed.

Though it chronicles his exploits in the first person, the book is not the work of Kingsford-Smith himself. Commander Rawson—as he explains in his preface—was entrusted by the airman with the task of describing his flying career, and had the use of his diaries and papers. These sources were supplemented by long conversations, in which Kingsford-Smith gave Commander Rawson detailed accounts of his flights. But there was one flight which “Smithy” was never able to describe—his attempt, in November, 1935, on the England-Australia record, during which he lost his life. Thus, *My Flying Life* ends, rather abruptly, with Kingsford-Smith handing over his veteran aeroplane, the Southern Cross, to the Commonwealth Government. I suggest that the book could have been rounded off more neatly by the inclusion of an appendix telling, so far as it is known, the story of “Smithy’s” last flight.

What sort of man was Kingsford-Smith? From these pages he emerges brave, modest, cheerful, loyal; but, above all, he was responsible. He was no “flying fool.” Though he had great confidence in himself, he refused to take risks—especially if the safety of others were involved. Yet he did not escape terrifying adventures. He lost a propeller over the Tasman Sea when the Southern Cross was carrying the Jubilee air mail to New Zealand; trying to beat Mollison’s Australia-England record, he was attacked by mysterious fits of nausea and giddiness; with three companions he was lost in the Australian bush for several weeks; erratic instruments nearly caused him to dive into the Atlantic.

Despite his sense of responsibility, Kingsford-Smith was restless—a legacy, I fancy, of his War service when, as little more than a boy, he fought with the R.F.C. in France. No sooner had he finished one record flight than he began to plan the next. But two other causes contributed to this restlessness: a genuine desire to forward aviation and the need for money. Kingsford-Smith was a poor business man: when he received his knighthood in 1932, he was eking out a livelihood by taking passengers for joy-rides in the Southern Cross at 10s. a time.

His financial problems are treated with the frankness which distinguishes the whole book. I put it down with the feeling that Kingsford-Smith’s candid nature was worthy of the simple valour of his achievements.

The Air Annual of the British Empire for 1937—the eighth year of publication—is for those concerned with the technicalities of aviation. Mr. J. E. Hodgson contributes an article commemorating the centenary of the first long distance over-sea voyage by air: it was in November, 1836, that Charles Green with two companions left Vauxhall Gardens in a balloon, crossed the Channel, and landed, after eighteen hours in the air, near Weilberg in the Duchy of Nassau.

Among other topics considered in this handsomely illustrated volume are "Recent Aerodynamic Improvements in the Aeroplane"; "Pioneer Work in the Fleet Air Arm"; and "The Empire Air Mail Scheme for 1937."

PHILIP STOCKIL.

THE NOVEL TO-DAY: Studies in Contemporary Attitudes. By PHILIP HENDERSON. Bodley Head. 7s. 6d.

SOME TWO years ago, Mr. Granville Hicks produced *The Great Tradition*, a revaluation of American Literature from a Marxist standpoint. An ambitious and precisely planned book, it raised a storm of controversy in the United States.

Now Mr. Henderson has produced a more ambitious and yet less definitive book, a series of studies of European and Transatlantic writers since the war, again from a Marxist standpoint.

According to this method, the criterion is social, not aesthetic: what is the author's relation to society, rather than how does he use words? Mr. Henderson points out that form and content are indivisible, two aspects of the same thing. "If we examine the content," he argues, "and find it lacking, we shall then be able to see incidentally where it is formally deficient."

In one sense this is obviously correct. A novelist sets himself a particular subject and the presentation of that subject has laws inherent in itself. For example, D. H. Lawrence's method of writing was evolved in order to present sensations and unconscious feelings. It would not be a suitable style for *Gulliver's Travels* or the *Pickwick Papers*.

But underlying Mr. Henderson's criticism is the assumption that prior to the war and after the war the only subject of importance was the relation of man to society, the class struggle. His first question is "What is this author's attitude to the class struggle?"

Writers all over the world, since the depression, are being drawn towards the study of man in relation to society: and one can go as far as to say that the whole subject of the novel is therefore

changing. But prior to the depression, it remains as a fact that English and most American authors were blind to this problem. From a political point of view, the Communist may be sorry at this blindness, but as a literary critic, as a social historian even, he sees it as a fact that is explicable according to his philosophy. Mr. Henderson makes the mistake of trying and finding wanting, rather than explaining; a mistake which will make his book less convincing to those who do not start by agreeing with him.

The author excuses himself for omissions on the ground that with so wide a field it is impossible to have read all the relevant material. This is, of course, true: but it does not prevent a feeling of regret that as important a writer as Jules Romains should receive a solitary laudatory mention, while Alec Brown, a writer who from a Communist point of view is merely a "fellow-traveller" and not as competent as he is sincere, receives five pages of exposition.

Nevertheless when all criticisms have been levelled at *The Novel To-day*, it still remains a book, significant of a new attitude to literature, and illuminating in many of its particular judgments.

A. CALDER-MARSHALL.

THE FOXES. BY A. P. HARRISS. *Methuen 7s. 6d.*

THIS IS a study of nature without sentiment. It takes place in South Carolina and most of the book is written from the fox's end of hunting. A dog fox and a vixen with their litter of cubs are followed through their several lives. To be hunted is only one of the dangers of their natural lives. No attempt has been made to describe this danger as being any more unreasonable, terrifying or heart-breaking to foxes than that of being run over by a motor-car is to humans.

On the other hand, the author is personal enough to give them each names and characteristics, as he does his hounds and humans from whose point of view he intermittently writes. But when the foxes in turn are killed by hounds or traps, it means no more than when the vixen ignores her cubs a year after whelping them.

Perhaps the only time when the book gets out of touch, is when the study is taken up from the aspect of the local gentry and soldiers who ride over from the neighbouring barracks to hunt the fox. They seem a little remote, but back again in the skin of an old nigger or a white man's child, contact is unquestionably established again.

The language at first appears flowery, but as a matter of fact, there is no exaggeration and no unnecessary words used. The

author has imagination which never impedes a precision of description and metaphor. The result of this is that there is a complete and refreshing absence of symbolism even of significance, to be read into the book. There is no lesson of Life to be learnt from it. There are no earthy or primitive passions, animal or human, welling up from the soil. Each incident in the sequence of seasons falls proportionately into its right place, becomes part of the general scene, and itself is lost.

This is a rare book, and it is to be regretted that as yet our own countryside has not been seen through this author's eyes.

A. B. McNULTY.

THE YEARS. By VIRGINIA WOOLF. *The Hogarth Press.* 8s. 6d.

THE WHITE FARM. By GERAINT GOODWIN. *Cape.* 7s. 6d.

NINEPENNY FLUTE. A. E. COPPARD. *Macmillan.* 7s. 6d.

A PENNY FOR THE POOR. By BERTOLT BRECHT. *Robert Hale.* 7s. 6d.

THE OTHER SIDE. By STEPHEN HUDSON. *Cresset Press.* 7s. 6d.

THE YEARS, as its title would indicate, is a biography of Time. In the lives of the Pargiter family in their actions, in their thoughts, and in their eyes the years pass; and the events, political and emotional, of half a century are reflected in their being. The major happenings of 1800-1937 are barely touched upon, but the human background of the story changes with infinite subtlety as a painting will change with the dust and damp, fires and bare hearths of a decade.

Each member of the Pargiter family is strengthened or devitalised, as the case may be, by the influence of externals hardly realised subjectively. With her deliberate, fluid skill, her boundless vision, her sudden, startling perception, Mrs. Woolf re-creates not only the colour and life of days within old memory, but the very scent exhaled by the years as they dropped and fell into the earth of memory itself.

The Pargiters, though sketched with mordant clarity, never step from the backcloth of the story. However separate or sharp their entities, they are eternally subordinated to the Titan Years, who trail their shadows behind them as they go, sometimes obscuring a face, sometimes sharpening it to an old and glorious beauty. Of all Mrs. Woolf's novels, this is the most nostalgic, the most austere, the most impressive. There is a certain divorce from life as we see it, a certain groping towards a dignity and peace too often denied us, a certain expression of wish-fulfilment. But it does present for

the first time in full clarity the hypothesis that change and readjustment are the great externals, with power to touch the flower but never the root.

Mr. Geraint Goodwin, in common with the several Welsh writers now pushing through like young plants into the light of public attention, relies on a strong National impetus. Not that he tends to that brand of topographical mysticism so essential to the work of the novelist, Rhys Davies, or the poet Dylan Thomas. He is concerned less with the earth that bore a people than with the people sprung from that gestation, whose thought and speech pitches and tosses as the hills rise and fall. Of these hard and exceedingly "local" short stories, few are lit with humour. The people of whom Mr. Goodwin writes, fight, love and suffer against the background darkness of economic stress, and the author's innate desire to show just how great this darkness is precludes him from pasting much humour on to the record of the pitifully poor. The few lighter stories, such as "Janet Ifan's Donkey," are appropriately stylised, stage-lit and raffishly mounted. The many tragedies are laconic and ungilded, and there is no attempt to reconcile what is with what ought to be. Mr. Goodwin has perhaps fallen into the error of over-subtlety; his conversations, obscured to the many by a lavish use of dialect, tend rather towards suggestion than towards enlightenment. Otherwise, these fine, raw stories mark a new and significant phase in the development of an uncompromising talent.

Mr. Coppard's new collection is something of a disappointment; perhaps I expect too much of him and decry in him what would be excellent enough in other writers. These stories seem to me little more than a set of amusing, agile colour-prints executed with considerable skill and little concentration. Most of them are fables told so purely and simply that the author might have related them orally to a child, "making them up as he went along." Not that this, in itself, is any reflection on the quality of Mr. Coppard's work. Though it is as neat as ever, as tidy in construction, as even in tone and colour, yet somehow the whole effect is one of slightness. The stories are pleasant, amusing, agreeable; but these adjectives are not good enough for Mr. Coppard. The title story is the best. There is the old touch here, the old bite.

" . . . And I'm blessed if this champion didn't come up to me and say: D'ye want a bit of a brish?"

"I thought to myself: 'Lord, shall I have just one good sock at his eye!' But before I knew what I was thinking of I said: 'No, thank you, sir,' and he passed on to someone else. We all

stood silent there like a flock of sheep waiting to be pole-axed and not daring say a word."

The other stories are evasive, unsatisfying; and one of them, "Speaking Likenesses," seems to me depressingly dainty. No one can afford to ignore a book from this most prominent short story writer, for he has given us great work and should give us great work again, but this collection will surely rank low in the future assessment of Mr. Coppard's achievement.

Herr Bertolt Brecht, author of the storm-raising "Dreigroschenoper," expands his operetta into a long novel to the glory of roguery. Peachum, Polly and MacHeath, grown older in centuries, wiser in guile and bigger in business, appear on the stage of this rumbustious story. Herr Brecht has no illusions and little regard for the proprieties. He manages to cram a tremendous amount of wit and fun into his pages and his plot, which is extremely complicated, is made clear by the steadiness of its unravelling. People who like robust fun, and can swallow with it a vast amount of social criticism will enjoy this book.

"The Other Side" is narrated by nineteen-year old Richard Kurt, who goes to the United States of fifty years ago to sample its curious flavour of provincialism and to embroil himself in the life of the Middle West. His multi-coloured impressions are recorded with terrific gusto and a lively zest for experience. This book has few technical qualities and would be less readable but for its speed.

PAMELA HANSFORD JOHNSON.

SHORTER NOTICES

ASPECT OF LIFE. BY JOHN KEIR CROSS. *Selwyn & Blount*. 8s. 6d.

AUTOBIOGRAPHIES of the very young are often more interesting than those of the distinguished old because they are less discreet, and their comparative lack of raw material makes them concentrate on a spiritual autobiography rather than an elongated gossip column. Mr. Cross will probably write better books in the future, but he has succeeded in producing a very interesting and original account of himself and his reactions to life.

ALONE ACROSS THE TOP OF THE WORLD. BY DAVID IRWIN. *Robert Hale*. 10s. 6d.

THE WRITING of this book perhaps hardly does justice to the very interesting adventures which are its raw material. But for those to whom the content is more than the style this book should be popular enough.

STAND-TO. A DIARY OF THE TRENCHES, 1915-1918. BY CAPTAIN F. C. HITCHCOCK, M.C. *Hurst & Blackett.* 15s.

THE DAY-TO-DAY life of an officer in the trenches on the Western Front in the Great War. Those who have admired Captain Hitchcock's *Saddle-Up* will not be disappointed by this personal and enthralling account of the experiences of those War years.

THE MAKER OF MODERN JAPAN. BY A. L. SADLER. *Allen & Unwin.* 16s.

NO KNOWLEDGE of contemporary affairs can be considered complete without a realization of the background of Japan's affairs; and no such realization is possible without some study of their history. Professor Sadler's book fills an important gap with his authoritative treatment of the great Japanese figure of the sixteenth century.

FOUNDATION OF AUSTRALIA. BY ERIS O'BRIEN. *Sheed & Ward.* 12s. 6d.

A FASCINATING account of the penal colonization of Australia in the eighteenth century. It is perhaps a gloomy story, for it has to tell of much that was stupid and ill-judged. But its interest never flags, and the reader can always reflect at a later date all turned out all right.

ITALY'S CONQUEST OF ABYSSINIA. BY MAJOR E. W. POLSON NEWMAN. *Butterworth.* 12s. 6d.

THIS BOOK contains the first authoritative account of the invasion of Abyssinia. It deals with the difficulties which faced the Italians in their military operations and in the provision of adequate supply services to the army. Not only is the author an authority on Abyssinia and its geography but he has been able to draw upon the official Italian records of the War supplemented by the rather inadequate messages received from war correspondents behind both the Italian and the Abyssinian lines. This book is an important one from the military point of view, dealing as it does with the effect of modern armaments which had not been previously tried out under service conditions in a difficult country. There are many lessons to be gained from a military point of view from reading this book.

NORTHWARD HO ! BY HAROLD NOSSITER. *Witherby*. 10s. 6d.

THE AUTHOR of this book was able to fulfil the yachtsman's dream of building his own ship and sailing it with his two sons from Australia to England. The *Sirius* is a 35-ton Staysail schooner specially designed for the purpose for which it was intended and the adventures of Mr. Nossiter and his party, who sailed via the East Indies, Ceylon and the Suez Canal to Plymouth, make vitally interesting reading for any amateur yachtsman. The book also contains many hints on ocean cruising in general and we wish good luck to the *Sirius* which is now being sailed back to Australia by the same crew.